



Huddersfield Local History Society

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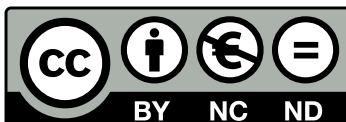
Christmas Special Journal

December 2020

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Huddersfield
Local
History
Society

Journal

CHRISTMAS
SPECIAL

2020

HUDDERSFIELD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY was formed in 1977. It was established to create a means by which peoples of all levels of experience could share their common interests in the history of Huddersfield and district. We recognise that Huddersfield enjoys a rich heritage. It is the home town of prime ministers and Hollywood stars; the birthplace of Rugby League and famous Olympic athletes; it has more buildings than Bath listed for historical or architectural interest; it had the first municipal trams and some of the first council housing; its radical heritage includes the Luddites, suffragettes, pacifists and other campaigners for change.

MEMBERSHIP of the Society runs from 1 September until 31 August and the present subscriptions per year are:

Individual membership £10

Double membership £15

Group membership £15

Double membership consists of two named persons using a single address and receiving one copy of the Society's Journal. Cheques should be made payable to Huddersfield Local History Society and sent to the Membership Secretary (address inside back cover) or submitted at a Society meeting. Payment by annual Standing Order is encouraged and a form may be downloaded from our website, which also allows online payment.

MEETINGS: Under normal circumstances, the Society organises a full programme of meetings each year. A programme of talks is currently being hosted online. Please see page iii of this issue for details, or visit our website.

PUBLICATIONS: The *Huddersfield Local History Society Journal* is produced on an annual basis, free to members and at a cost of £4.00 to non-members. In addition, the Society publishes books which are listed separately in this Journal, together with details of prices and how they may be purchased.

WEBSITE: www.huddersfieldhistory.org.uk

Front cover: Michael Podger, 'Viaduct' (CC-BY); Dave Pattern, 'snow' (CC-BY); 'Winter in Birkby' Courtesy of Brian Jury; Dave Pattern, 'A robin posing in the garden' (CC-BY).

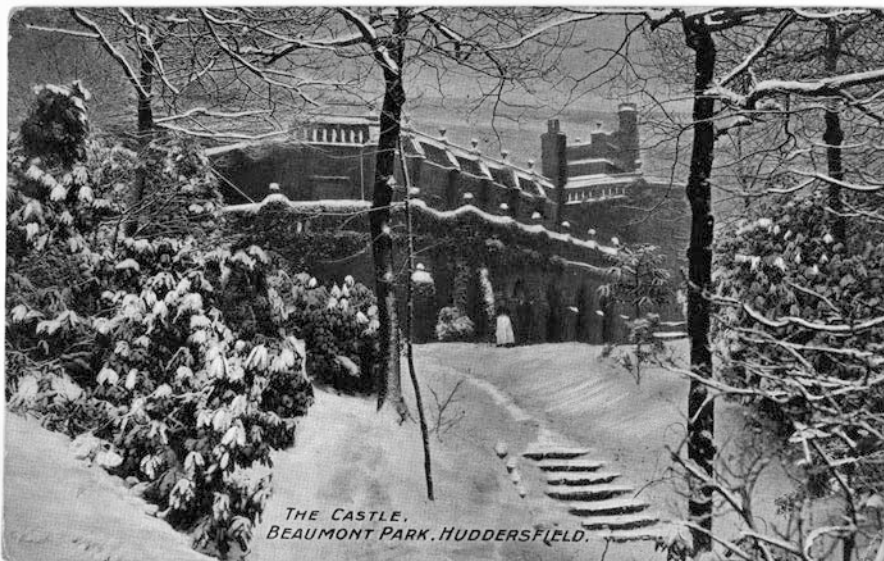
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HUDDERSFIELD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

JOURNAL

Christmas 2020

Special Edition



The Castle, Beaumont Park, Huddersfield. Postmarked 1907. Scan courtesy of *Huddersfield Exposed*.

Would you like to submit an article for inclusion in the Journal?

The Society welcomes photographs, letters, original articles, diary extracts, and other research items, ideally not longer than 3,000 words, on any aspects of local history.

Please send items for publication to the editor at: editor@huddersfieldhistory.org.uk. The deadline for submission of copy for the 2020/21 Journal, Issue 32, will be Monday, 1 March 2021.

A style guide is available for members wishing to produce articles and the Society offers help for those less confident in using a computer. The style guide can be found on the Society's website www.huddersfieldhistory.org.uk.

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NOTES FOR A COVID CHRISTMAS SPECIAL 2020

Cyril Pearce

My 'Notes from Isolation' in our 2020/2021 Journal spoke of 'strange and difficult times' and expressed some concern about 'the details of a future after Covid-19'. Writing six months later those details are still far from clear and the 'strange and difficult times' show no signs of coming to an end. What we described then as the 'new normal' of life with a global pandemic has become commonplace. We all have our masks; we all take care to avoid crowded places - where such things still exist; we persistently wash our hands; we worry about the loved ones we aren't allowed to see and we miss the social gatherings which seem to have been indefinitely postponed. Some of us even agonise about the 'Covid flab' brought on by inactivity, too much sweetstuff and endless cups of tea. As we approach the end of the year, with rising numbers of those infected, an acceleration in the death rate and dire warnings of further lock-downs, little seems to have changed and the grim times of Spring 2020 are still with us.



The consolation, or should I say compensation, is that the many challenges of these Covid times have brought out the creativity in Huddersfield Local History Society's committee members. By the time you are reading this you may have seen at least three of our on-line virtual talks – and, since they are on YouTube, you may still be watching them. There will be more to come in the New Year and, unless there are significant changes to the Covid regulations, it is likely that Professor Royle's postponed 2020 Lud-dite Memorial Lecture, now scheduled for April 2021, will also be delivered on-line. It is hugely reassuring to have speakers who are prepared to meet the challenge of doing that and, it has to be said, the technical ability of my colleagues in supporting them seems endless. In particular I must thank Dave Pattern – master of all things IT – for his help in organising and delivering the on-line talks. Without his expertise we would have struggled.

That my colleagues are able to rise to yet another challenge is evidenced by this publication. We took the decision that, in the absence of our regular monthly meetings and Study Days, we should explore the possibility of a special Covid Christmas edition our Journal. Here you will find pieces with Christmas and New Year themes which colleagues have unearthed from well-known local sources. An account in the *Huddersfield Chronicle* for Christmas 1873 describes in Dickensian detail - not easy reading for the vegetarian – the rich variety of meat and poultry on display in the town with only a passing reference to a fruiterer. There is writing here from Linthwaite's Suffragist Florence Lockwood's autobiography describing New Year's Eve in 1902 and 1907 with 'Guisers' and 'Mummers' singing for their suppers and, on Christmas morning the

sound of 'Christians Awake!'. There are similar stories from Ben Turner's autobiography of door-to-door 'Mummers' and carol singers in Holmfirth and in John Sugden's account of Slaithwaite at Christmas in 1905. Mrs Jagger's reflection on Christmases in Honley in times past has the nostalgic feel of a memory of things lost – and scattered throughout are images of historic Christmas cards and mementos.

Interspersed with all of these are pieces that appeared in very early Local History Society journals. Most of them are available on-line through our website but this is Rob Piggott, the editor's, selection. Since he has chosen to publish one of my early pieces, I really ought not to comment further except to say that all the pieces he has chosen are well worth seeing again.

I hope you find this 'Bumper Christmas Edition' a really good read and up to our usual standard. My thanks to Rob Piggott and to all those members, past and present, who have made it possible.

To all the members of the Society and to those non-members reading this, my very warmest Christmas greetings and best wishes for a Covid-free New Year. Do take care. I hope to see you all in 2021.



TALKS PROGRAMME 2020-2021

Until further notice, our talks programme will be online and will be available via our website from the dates listed below. Any changes to the advertised programme will appear on the website.

28 September 2020

Edward Royle

‘The town that bought itself’? New light on 1920

26 October 2020

Alan Brooke

Peterloo: the aftermath in West Yorkshire. Prelude to Insurrection

30 November 2020

Barbara Smith

‘Wools for the World’ in Railway Street

21 December 2020

Christine Verguson

‘People who talk Edgerton’? James R. Gregson and the Huddersfield Thespians

25 January 2021

David Griffiths

Highfields: ‘a most handsome’ suburb

22 February 2021

Peter Burton

The Holme Valley in the Middle Ages

29 March 2021

Alice Brumby

Telling Their Stories: ‘Shell-Shocked’ Ex-servicemen in Storthes Hall Mental Hospital

26 April 2021

Luddite Memorial Lecture

Edward Royle

Radicalism in the West Riding 1790 to 1890

24 May 2021

Patricia Callum

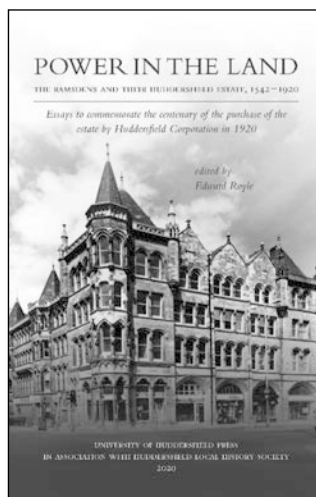
Medieval Almondbury and Kirkburton – a contrast (title tbc)

NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM HLHS

Our latest publications are announced below. Information on others can be found at the back of this issue.

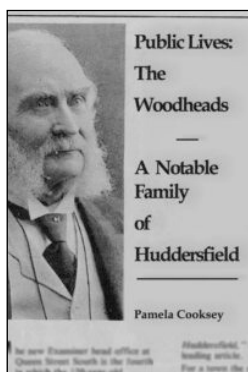
September 2020 saw the centenary of Huddersfield Corporation's purchase of the Ramsden estate, ending more than three centuries of the Ramsdens' dominant part in local affairs. The Society has brought together a series of original essays on the Ramsdens' role, and reappraised the famous story of 'the town that bought itself', in a handsome new book, *Power in the Land*, published by the University of Huddersfield Press.

Edited and with contributions by Edward Royle, emeritus professor of history at the University of York and long-standing HLHS member, the book also includes chapters by Society members Stephen Counce, David Griffiths, Brian Haigh and John Halstead; architectural historian Christopher Webster; and Ramsden relative Meriel Buxton.



The extensively illustrated 264-page volume is available at £30 from Gazelle Books, <https://www.gazellebookservices.co.uk>. Paid-up members who did not take up the half-price pre-publication offer can still buy the book for £20 – please contact publications@huddersfieldhistory.org.uk for details.

Public Lives – our first e-book



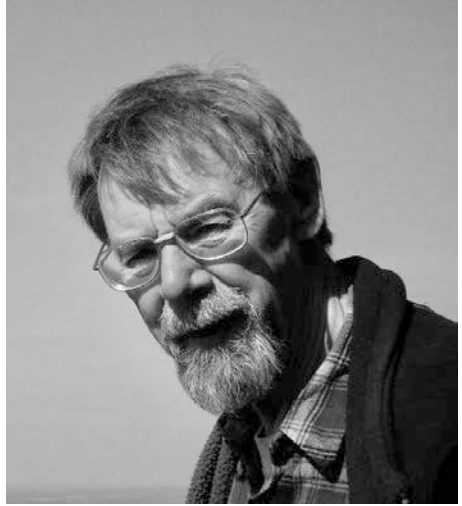
The Society has also published, on-line only, a revised edition of Pamela Cooksey's study of the Woodhead family, founders and owners of the *Examiner* and distinguished in many other walks of life. This is available to download from our website, <https://www.huddersfieldhistory.org.uk>, for £1.

Also available on the website is a complete archive of the *Journal* from its first issue in 1983. If the selection of past articles in this edition whets your appetite, there is much more to explore there.

EDWARD LAW HISTORY PRIZE

The Edward Law History Prize was set up in 2017 by Huddersfield Local History Society in recognition of our member and prolific local historian, Edward Law, who died in 2013.

The Society is convinced there is a great talent and enthusiasm for the history of the place and its people. This modest competition, open to all ages, and in partnership with the University of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire Branch of the Historical Association, *Huddersfield Exposed* and Kirklees Libraries, is about tapping into that talent, recognising it and sharing it more widely.

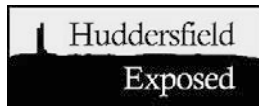


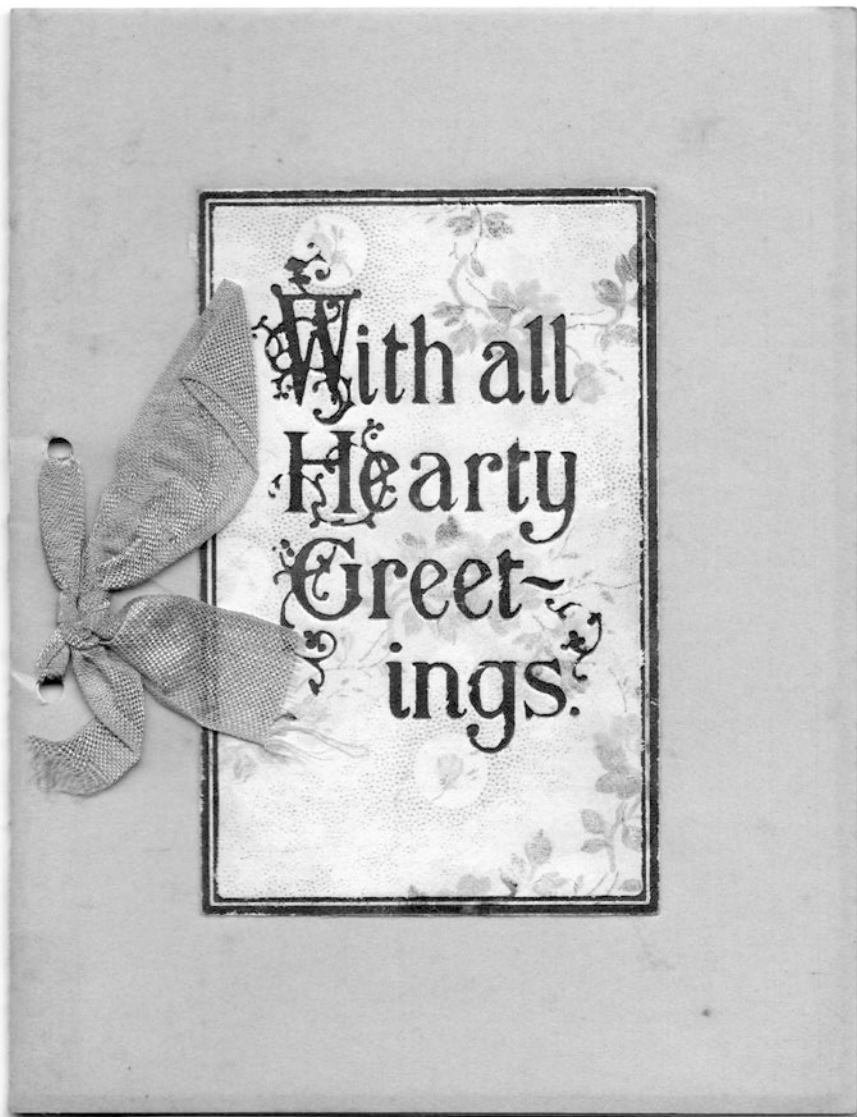
Edward Law (1945-2013)

If you would like to enter the 2021 competition, please forward your expression of interest to the Society's publicity officer at: info@huddersfieldhistory.org.uk.

The competition is open to anyone who has not previously published any historical research. There are two categories with the long-essay prize for submissions of 2,500 to 3000 words having the chance to win £150, and the short-essay prize for submissions of 500-800 words eligible for £50 reward.

Please spread the word about this initiative and keep an eye on the Society's website and other publicity material for more details.





Christmas 1903

With Sincerest Wishes
for a Happy Christmas and
a Bright New Year

From
Mr. & Mrs. J. M. Bates
South View
Blackhouse Road
Huddersfield

RECRUITS FOR THE HAVER-CAKE LADS

John H. Rumsby (1984)

Members of the Workshop will be familiar with the illustration in Walker's *Costume of Yorkshire* depicting a recruiting party of - the 33rd Regiment of Foot - later the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment.¹ Walker records that the regiment was originally raised in the Halifax district, and gained its local nickname of 'Haver-cake Lads' from the recruiting sergeant's custom of carrying a haver-cake, or oat-cake, on the point of his sword. Perhaps this custom was meant to suggest to the would-be recruit that if he joined the army he would never lack for bread! Honour and glory were further inducements, as is indicated by the poster depicted by Walker on the wall of the Inn, which promises 'Honour... Wealth... Fame'. The soldiers are distributing cockades, and drink is circulating freely.

All these methods were described by a Scottish recruiting sergeant, who makes the point that various potential recruits should be treated in different ways.² Thus the plough boys were promised quick promotion, and lodgings in towns where 'the pigs and fowls are lying in the streets ready roasted, with knives and forks in them, for the soldier to eat, whenever he pleases'. Sentimental chaps on the other hand, were plied with tales of heroics, and 'glory, honour, laurels, drums, trumpets, applauding world, deathless fame, immortality, and all that'. This sergeant had been a weaver, and claimed special skill in enlisting from that trade:

The truth is, you could scarcely ever catch a weaver contented... The best way was to make up to the individual you had in your eye, and, after bidding him the time of day, ask him what sort of web he had in. You might be sure it was a bad one, for when a weaver turns lazy his web is always bad; ask him how a clever handsome-looking fellow like him could waste his time handing see-saw between heaven and hell, in a damp unwholesome shop... when he could breathe the pure air of heaven, and have little or nothing to do, if he enlisted for a soldier; that the weaving was going to ruin, and he had better get into some berth, or he might soon be starved.

However, the fish was first hooked, the way to hang on to him was 'to get him drunk, blow him up with a fine story, get him inveigled to the magistrate in some shape or other, and get him attested'. If the magistrate was in league with the recruiting soldier, so much the better. This is exactly the situation described in a complaint by John Platts, clothier of Honley, to R.H. Beaumont, J.P., on 8 June 1795:

1 George Walker, *The Costume of Yorkshire, illustrated by a series of Forty engravings*, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Leeds 1814, Plate XXII.

2 Joseph Donaldson, *Recollections of an Eventful Life Chiefly Passed in the Army*, W. R. McPhun, Glasgow (2nd ed. 1825) pp167-173. The sergeant's description, as reported by Donaldson, provides one of the most graphic contemporary accounts of recruiting methods. Donaldson's regiment was the 94th Foot - the 'Scotch Brigade'.

The said informant on his oath saith that he is about fifteen years of age and on Thursday the 4th day of June... being in liquor he went to the Swann Inn in Huddersfield, ...and got a pint of ale there, about five o'clock in the afternoon, when John Ashburn a Private in the fourth battalion of the Royal Artillery put a shilling into his hand and told him he was enlisted. The said John Ashburn kept this complainant intoxicated and took him next day about ten o'clock in the forenoon before a magistrate at about twenty miles distance and got him attested, though there were several other magistrates nearer.³

Since the soldier received a bounty for every recruit secured, such measures were well worth the trouble.



The Havercake Lads

This engraving was published as Plate XXII 'The Thirty-third Regiment' in George Walker's *The Costume of Yorkshire* in 1814. It depicts a recruiting party of the Regiment, and is full of well-observed detail. The sergeant in the centre waves an oatcake on his sword – a promise of being well-fed. His belt-plate clearly shows the Regiment's number. The soldiers and some civilians wear rosettes in their hats – these were given out to mark the new recruits. The two men 'fencing' with sticks on the left wear the white clothes with red trim typical of coal miners – as depicted in another of Walker's illustrations, Plate III 'The Collier'. The similar but distinctive dress of the drummer behind them may have served as an encouragement. To complete the picture the inn, where much liquid persuasion appears to be taking place, is called the 'Duke of Wellington' and displays a poster promising the recruits 'Honor, Wealth and Fame.' (With thanks to the Leeds Library for access to their fine copy of *The Costume of Yorkshire*).

3 Photostat copy in Tolson Memorial Museum, Huddersfield. Does anyone know the location of the original?

Although county titles were allocated to regiments in 1782, recruiting was carried out wherever the regiment was stationed, and also in whichever districts the commanding officer chose to send recruiting parties.⁴ The majority of recruits were labourers of one sort or another, but many occupations were represented, especially those of the chief trades in the area concerned. Therefore, Halifax might be expected to produce a good crop of discontented weavers. However, it is interesting to note that Walker's potential recruits include one dressed in an off-white jacket and trousers, trimmed in red - exactly the costume described by him in his Plate III as being typical of Yorkshire coal miners.

In the Public Record Office there is a series of discharge papers which give considerable detail about the soldiers concerned, although only those awarded pensions are included. The following three examples from the 33rd Foot illustrate the type of men recruited during the Napoleonic Wars.⁵

Jonathan Hinchliffe

Born Burton, near Huddersfield.

Enlisted Chatham, Kent, 13th June 1811, aged 24, for unlimited service.

Served 16 years 87 days (plus 2 extra years counted for presence at Waterloo).

Discharged due to 'general impaired health and injury to left foot, and worn out'.

Conduct: Good.

Description on discharge: Age about 40; height 5' 5¾"; hair dark; eyes grey; complexion fair.

Trade: clothier.

Signed form with a cross, therefore, illiterate.

William Hill

Born Aristone [?], Hertfordshire.

Enlisted 3rd April 1809, aged 21.

Served 7 years 111 days (plus 2 extra years counted for Waterloo), in Captain M'Intyre's Company.

Discharged due to gun-shot wound in right arm received at Waterloo.

Description on discharge: age about 28 years; height 5' 8½"; brown hair; grey eyes; fresh complexion.

4 For example, the ranks of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers (23rd Foot) at Waterloo contained 404 Englishmen, 190 Welsh, 63 Irish, 7 Scots, and 3 others (including one born in Florence!). The English came from three main areas, East Anglia, the South-West, and the Midlands, especially the Manchester district. All three areas provided many weavers and other clothworkers, presumably thrown out of work by wartime economic conditions. Statistics extracted from N. Holme and E. L. Kirby, *Medal Rolls 23rd Foot - Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Napoleonic Period*, R.W.F. Regimental Museum, Caernarfon, 1978.

5 Public Record Office: WO.97 series. Kirklees Museum possess the Waterloo Medal awarded to William Holmes of the 33rd Foot, but there is unfortunately no discharge document for him at the P.R.O.

William Holdsworth

Born Halifax, Yorkshire.

Served 2 years 222 days (plus 2 extra years counted for Waterloo), in Captain Langden's Company. Promoted Corporal.

Discharged due to gun-shot wound in left hand received at Waterloo.

Description on discharge; age about 21; height 5' 6"; brown hair; grey eyes; light complexion.

Trade: trunk maker.

Signed form with his name.

The pensions awarded to these men are unfortunately not recorded, but they probably underwent a similar experience to that described by John Green of the 68th (Durham) Light Infantry:

After the Commander in chief had taken his place as the president (of the Pension Board), we fell into ranks, just as our names stood on the surgeon's list. The men now began to pass the board, and as they came out, each man was questioned as to what pension he had got. At length it came to my turn: the secretary read my name, the state of my wound, and character, aloud. One of the gentlemen said 'Nine-pence', another 'One shilling'; but the majority were for nine-pence. I made a low bow and left the room.⁶

Postscript

It may be of interest to mention another local veteran of Waterloo, Benjamin Smith, who died in 1845 and was buried in Kirkburton Parish churchyard. He served in the Royal Artillery, and, as his tombstone says, 'He fought for his country under the command of Field Marshall the Duke of Wellington at the Memorable Battle of Waterloo'. At the top of the stone is carved the reverse design of the medal issued to all troops who served in the Waterloo campaign. Originally the medal was issued with a rather ugly iron ring joining medal and ribbon, and this was often replaced by the recipient with a straight suspender. Such a suspender is shown on the tombstone, and it therefore seems certain that the sculptor used Smith's own medal as a model, rather than a drawing. It would be interesting to know if this medal still exists.

Smith's discharge papers fortunately survive at the Public Record Office, and they tell us a little more about him.⁷ He was born in Kirkburton and was a weaver by trade. He enlisted at Sheffield in 1812 at the age of eighteen. Although he enlisted for 'unlimited service', he was in fact discharged in 1819, when his battery of artillery was reduced during the shrinkage of the army that followed the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The papers confirm Smith's service at Waterloo, and describe his conduct as 'good'. Since he 'signed' his name with a cross, he must have been illiterate. He is recorded as being 5 feet 6 inches in height, with brown hair, hazel eyes, and a fair complexion.

⁶ John Green, *The Vicissitudes of a Soldier's Life*, J. and J. Jackson, Louth, 1827, p219. Green served from 1806 to 1815, and took part in many of the great battles of the Peninsular War, before receiving a severe wound during the Battle of the Pyrenees.

⁷ WO.97.1262.



Benjamin Smith's gravestone in Kirkburton Churchyard.
Photo: Author's own.



Christmas 1897

With the Season's Greeting
and
Best Wishes for the New Year

From
Mr. & Mrs. John Pyrah
Fartown
Huddersfield

EXTRACT FROM: *THE HISTORY OF HONLEY AND ITS HAMLETS FROM THE EARLIEST TIME TO THE PRESENT*

Mary A. Jagger (1914)

Christmas

The local observance of Christmas ranks next in importance to keeping the Feast, though the same new forces are at work which are slowly but surely destroying the once distinctive character of old-time Christmas customs in Honley. Plum pudding, mince pies, spice cake, cheese, etc., are still prepared by all good housewives, if the custom of brewing 'a barrel full of beer' is not so common in homes as formerly. The old sacredness of the misletoe is yet honoured by its importance along with evergreens in the decoration of houses. People who live in towns may only think of the 'Waits' as tiresome persons who make night hideous with their discordant noises. We older people in Honley have happier memories of Christmas nights, when we listened with bated breath for the first strains of 'Christians awake', or While Shepherds watched their flocks by night'. Mellowed and softened by distance, the music was not sung by ordinary mortals, but sounded in childish ears akin to the angel's song of long ago. Then there was the haunting tune of 'The Mistletoe Bough', the words of which brought vividly to youthful imaginations that old chest in the castle, the fairy bride, and the gallant Sir Lovel who, when oldy 'wept for his fairy bride', that we also wept at the repetition of the old-world romance. The young people can still repeat with fluency the old wishing rhyme of 'pockets full of money, and barrels full of beer' when 'letting in' Christmas.

Sword dancers, mummers, wassailers, peace egg actors, etc., are all relics of long-past pagan customs, catholic worship, or ancient Mystery Plays. The white steed Gleipnir belonging to the Norse God Woden, from whose name comes our Wednesday, re-appears again in the wooden horse danced around by boys in their Christmas plays. Honley boys still keep up a few observances of these old plays even if only remnants of the past. They yet bedeck themselves with ribbons, tinsels, and imitation swords when attempting to imitate the wonderful achievements of St. George and other gallant knights described in the Peace Egg book, not forgetting the black demon. We have also merrymakings of various degrees ranging from a ball to a 'Laking' or 'Playing Night', when 'Here comes three jolly, jolly sailor boys' is sung as the merrymakers march around in couples on stone flagged cottage-floors. The lilting strain of the old ditty is trilled forth with youthful vigour, the only requirement for enjoyment being a pillow or cushion to be 'kissed on the floor'. Other merrymakings also vary in character from the stately dinner-party at 'Th' Maisters' to a humble boiling of toffee, when the dwellers in some 'yerd' or 'fowd' join their finances for the purpose of purchasing treacle and butter. Do we not all remember those 'laking nights' and 'boiling of toffee nights' of the past? How we pulled, turned, twisted, thumped and kneaded that toffee until it

almost begged to be eaten! The various games particularly associated with Christmas festivities at each of our homes, such as 'blindman's buff', 'hunt the slipper', 'kiss on the floor', 'guessing riddles', etc., are also still popular amongst us.



Stereoscope Image of Grimescar Woods, date unknown. Courtesy of Brian Jury.

LASCELLES HALL

Keith Brockhill (1985)

Despite lending its name to a small village on the eastern outskirts of Huddersfield, Lascelles Hall is one of the location of the Hall itself on a secluded hillside between Lepton and Kirkheaton. Even the narrow village road dips into a treelined cutting and the house can only be seen properly from a distance. What can be seen is a plain, rather severe, late-Georgian facade, sadly lacking in the multiple gables, mullioned windows and ornate stonework that usually suggest a local house of great age. Indeed, there is little to suggest that this is not just another mill owner's mansion of no particular significance. Yet history there is, for although Lascelles Hall is not a Woodsome or Whitley Beaumont, it does have a history stretching back into the Middle Ages. The purpose of these notes is to outline that history - with the excuse, if one is needed, that few such houses now fulfil their original purpose and plain No. 80 Lascelles Hall Road is fortunate to have survived long enough to warrant a belated acknowledgement in the National Heritage List for England.

Sources for the Hall's history are numerous, but fragmentary. No single family lived here for unbroken centuries leaving behind a rich deposit of plans and correspon-



Lascelles Hall, near Huddersfield. Scan courtesy of *Huddersfield Exposed*.

dence. There is some Beaumont documentation, but most sources are from secondary material and the most notable of these is the work of Leigh Tolson. He was the only real historian of Lascelles Hall and his account in the monumental *History of the Church of St. John the Baptist, Kirkheaton, Yorkshire and annals of the Parish* forms the basis of any research, but has to be treated with caution as it draws on some documents no longer available.

It is often difficult to separate the Hall itself from the village of the same name in many sources, but it is as a place name that the earliest references appear. In the twelfth century Simon de Lascelles held three Knights fees of the Honour of Pontefract and by 1287 Cecily and Agnes de Lascelles were holding land in Lepton. By the fifteenth century the place name was established although the whereabouts of the actual Hall are a mystery. This is significant, for the Lascelles family connection was already coming to an end. John Lascelles had no sons and his estate was divided among three daughters. One of these, Joan, married Henry Beaumont of Whitley, thus linking Lascelles Hall to one of the most powerful families in the district.

Not that the Beaumonts were the only important family, for among their neighbours was a branch of the Ramsden family and John Ramsden's construction of another hall in the late sixteenth century provided an unusual twist to the Hall's history for, as Tolson explains,

[t]here were then two Lascelles Hall's adjacent to each other with only a lane between them and surrounded by intermingling stables and farm buildings: the Old Hall belonged to the Beaumonts and the New Hall to the Ramsdens.

Contemporary documents confirm this dual presence. Thus 'William Beaumont of Lacell Hall' appears in a conveyance of 1583, while 'John Ramsden of Lacelhall' is involved in a settlement of titles in 1605. A little later in the seventeenth century, the Ramsdens appear to have acquired both halls. Sir John F. Ramsden writing three centuries later, referred to a deed of 1611 as 'the first mention of the acquisition of Lascelles Hall from the Beaumont family'. Yet the Ramsden tenure was relatively brief, for John was succeeded by both his son and grandson in the space of two years and the estate was divided again. The Old Hall reverted to Beaumont ownership until the early eighteenth century, while the New Hall was divided into two separate dwellings, the Overside and Laverside Halls. These were described in a contemporary document which ascribed the 'West end of the New Hall' to Mr. Thomas Wray and 'ye east end of ye New Hall to Mr. Henry Partington'. They were, respectively, the husbands of Elizabeth and Ellen Ramsden. Laverside Hall passed, eventually through various hands to the Walker family', while its twin enjoyed a brief period of local fame as the home of the Rev. Christopher Richardson.

Installed by Parliament at Kirkheaton Parish Church, the Rev. Richardson had wisely retired at the Restoration, apparently purchasing the Overside Hall for £720. Not that

this meant an end to preaching, for the great hall at Overside was so well used that it became known as 'the preaching room', and its enthusiastic owner was called to account by the magistrate Sir John Kaye of Woodsome. This incident is recalled in the diary of the Rev. Oliver Heywood, a friend of Richardson's.

Other insights into life at the Overside Hall are provided by another cleric diarist, the Rev. Robert Meeke of Slaithwaite, a colleague of Richardson's son - also named Christopher. His life appears rather more genteel with at least one visit to the 'Knaresborough Spaws', possibly to counteract the effects of a rapidly growing family - one of whom had the misfortune to be named after the place of his birth, 'Lassell'! Subsequently the family moved away and a series of transactions brought the Overhall into the ever acquisitive hands of the Walkers.

By the early nineteenth century, the Walkers had become the dominant family at Lascelles Hall, the culmination of a process begun in the mid-eighteenth century. A wool merchant from Cowlersley, Joseph Walker (I) had purchased the former Beaumont Hall from the Denton family - the Beaumonts having sold out in 1714 - around 1750. It is possible that he carried out building works, for the stables (now cottages) carry a datestone with the initials of Joseph and his wife Sarah. A more ornate memorial was provided in Kirkheaton Parish Church for the couple, who died within 20 days of each other in 1774.

The new owner, Samuel, was the head of a family busily establishing itself in local society. Following in Beaumont footsteps, Samuel became a governor of King James Grammar School. His sister Sarah married George Armitage 'Th' Justice' of Honley and a niece married into the Huddersfield banking family of Dobson and Co. There was sufficient prosperity for further building work to be undertaken - virtually a complete rebuilding in effect, but a lack of evidence obscures this vital development. Tolson states firmly that Samuel, who died in 1809, was the builder of the main part of the house, the National Heritage List for England keeps to a vague 'late 18th century'. A study of contemporary maps shows little change in the overall pattern of buildings from 1780 to the present day, but there was a major landscaping exercise between 1821 and 1837. This created a tree-fringed park around the Hall and appears to move the line of the road, perhaps to give greater privacy. The house-front itself is rather plain, enlivened only by a recessed entrance and pediment, but has a commanding view which must have been very pleasant before the advent of I.C.I. in the valley below. Internally the layout of rooms is rather unusual; particular features being the lack of a main staircase or entrance hall and the increasing height of the ground floor rooms along the length of the house. In common with many other houses rebuilt at this time, an older wing, housing the kitchen and servants quarters, was left standing, tucked away at the back. This building is of the same style, and probably age, as the stables and barn, with which it forms a harmonious and attractive setting.

The gentleman for whom this formed a suitable residence was Joseph Walker (II) coun-

ty magistrate, governor of King James' and benefactor of local charities. His daughter, and ultimate heir, Amelia, was suitably educated at Miss Wooller's School, Roe Head where she studied with the goddaughter of her aunt Frances, Charlotte Bronte. Frances Walker's husband, the Rev. Thomas Atkinson of Hartshead was a close friend of the Rev. Patrick Bronte and the family connections eventually brought Charlotte and her sister Anne to Lascelles Hall in the summer of 1836. Charlotte came reluctantly but found her day with the Walkers not too unpleasant. Amelia lived up to her status, being 'utterly spoiled by the most hideous affectation' and brother William turned out to be 'an incorrigible booby'. Still it was better than the longer holiday envisaged by her father.

In fact, the Walkers were soon to leave Lascelles Hall for the kinder climate of Torquay and the house was let to a succession of tenants. Most notable among these were the cricketing Hirsts, two sons of the family played for both the village and county teams.

William Walker predeceased his father and the death of Amelia, still in Torquay, in 1892 brought the Hall onto the open market. The auction at the Queen Hotel, Huddersfield in 1893 split the estate into 16 separate lots and precipitated the Old Hall into a new era of rapidly changing ownership. Half a dozen owners in little more than half a century have ensured a major change in circumstances. The drawing rooms, billiard rooms, wine cellars and accommodation for half a dozen servants have given way to self-contained flats. The once extensive gardens, now only remembered in aerial photographs, have given way to 'executive' housing the barn is likely to be transformed into country cottages. But the Hall itself has survived, escaping the fate of the Ramsden' Hall, which as long ago as 1882 was 'uninhabited and fast falling into decay... surrounded by cottages of a very humble character, but even in ruin... distinguished by certain architectural features which stamp it as having been the residence of a family of position'.

‘NEVER WAS THERE SUCH A TIME’; HUDDERSFIELD SUFFRAGETTES IN 1907

Joyce Stevens (1989)

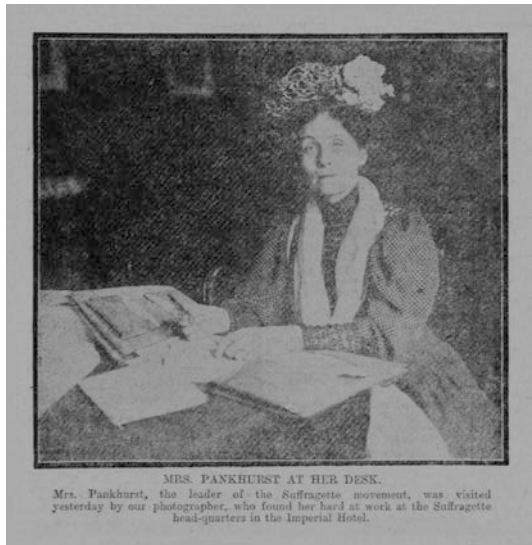
The movement for women’s suffrage occupied rather more than half a century: from mid-Victorian days until the ultimately successful conclusion in 1928 with the ‘Flapper vote’, suffrage for all women over twenty-one.

Throughout the nineteenth century conventional methods employed to win the cause had met with little progress. ‘Militancy’ began in Manchester, it was there in 1905 that the famous question ‘Will the Liberal Government give women the vote?’ was asked. It was there that for the first time women were forcibly ejected from a major political meeting and subsequently imprisoned. From this time on women took matters into their own hands.

The Pankhurst family were the greatest figures in the years that followed. Mrs Pankhurst and her supporters, under the slogan ‘Votes for Women’, began the campaign that was to harass and disturb the Liberal administration that ruled continuously in Britain from 1906 until Asquith entered into a limited coalition early in the First World War. What the intense feelings were that could convert Victorian womanhood into creatures of violence is an important and fascinating question.

Of the intense sense of injustice there can be no doubt; no one suffers fear, abuse, imprisonment and starvation recurrently over the years for the sake of renown or for fun. Nor do reasonable and intelligent women turn themselves into figures of ridicule.

The constitution of the country had made it impossible for the women’s cause to be pursued constitutionally without the unforthcoming support from men. Women had to fight by every means open to voteless persons and design their activities to put sufficient pressure upon the government to make them realise that there was more to be lost than gained by a persistent refusal to put into practice the democratic principle they so loudly confessed to.



Newspaper photograph of Suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst, seated in a room of the Imperial Hotel, New Street, Huddersfield, in November 1906. She had come to the town to campaign during the by-election.

Writing in her biography *The Hard Way Up*, subtitled 'Suffragette and Rebel' Hannah Mitchell documents suffragette activity at the Huddersfield by-election of 1907. 'With all her ablest lieutenants in prison Mrs Pankhurst asked me to go with her to open a campaign against the Government'.

Ostensibly, the suffragettes were campaigning against the Liberals and Conservatives, but inadvertently supporting Victor Grayson, the socialist candidate, in whom they had a keen advocate of their cause. A speaker at a Liberal Meeting in Slaithwaite called women's suffrage a matter of 'interest'. Interest would go nowhere to enhance their battle, action was what was needed. Hannah Mitchell tells of her arrival in Huddersfield 'we two alone held a meeting at the Market Cross which aroused such interest that at the close we had enough volunteers to fill the town the next day'.

Reg Groves, author of *The Strange Case of Victor Grayson*, sets the scene when he tells of the 'struggle in the West Riding'. 'A saga of struggle could be written about the people living in this area: about the ceaseless struggle to live, to think in their own way, to express themselves'.

Women latched onto the suffragette meetings to express themselves and their sense of injustice. 'We held meetings every day. Hundreds of women would attend afternoon meetings and walk around the town in procession, afterwards pausing outside the Liberal Committee rooms to cry 'Vote against the Government' - Hannah Mitchell. Florence Lockwood writes in her biography *An Ordinary Life*, 'During the excitement, when I was coming through Linthwaite Fold I stopped and helped to swell the crowd who were listening to Mrs Pankhurst: a woman speaker was something quite new. What she said was new and inspiring to me'.

She relates how she came to support the cause.

As I walked slowly up the hill on my way home, deeply impressed, one of my sisters-in-law overtook me and touched me on the arm. I asked her if she had been listening to Mrs Pankhurst, 'no indeed', she indignantly replied, 'I believe women's place is in the home'. This limitation of women's sphere set my heart beating furiously and I took up the cudgels in defence of votes for women for the first time.

Mrs Pankhurst was interviewed by the *Colne Valley Guardian*.

Speaking to our representative this evening, Mrs Pankhurst stated that they would take an active part in the campaign. An active crusade on behalf of women's suffrage would be entered upon at once.

It was expected that representatives from Manchester, Leeds and other centres would take part. The *Guardian* concluded the article by adding that Mrs Pankhurst was to be assisted by Mrs Kay, secretary of the Huddersfield branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage.



Hannah Mitchell addresses a crowd. From the *Daily Mirror*, 27 November 1906, p9

It was the Association's intention to transport all their forces to the Colne Valley after the Jarrow by-election was over. 5 July saw Mrs Pankhurst paying a flying visit to Slaithwaite, where she was engaged in a vain search for apartments. In her view the people of Slaithwaite were a 'clannish lot', not given to open doors and arms to every charmer, 'charm she ever so bewitchingly'. Private householders and publicans steeled their hearts and closed their doors, but the party were in no way downhearted, Huddersfield was not far away and there shelter could be found.

During the campaign, several members of the Association were in prison, including the Pankhurst daughters, they had been sentenced to two months imprisonment. Posters were reproduced and displayed in the town demanding their release. Hannah Mitchell says 'we so beset and bedevilled the Liberal candidate that the Government gave in and released all the captives halfway through their sentences'. The released women took the first train to Huddersfield. All the available halls had been booked in anticipation, but all were packed long before the train was due.

Huddersfield honoured itself that day, by the welcome it gave to those women; yet not one of the by-election candidates had the 'manliness' to declare himself on our side.

- Hannah Mitchell

Florence Lockwood relates how she saw Adele Pankhurst after her release: she wore a 'little, dirty, limp print dress, her face was sunburnt, freckled and perspiring, her voice was hoarse from over use'. Meetings of all the candidates were well attended,

but Grayson's were packed, overflowing from halls into the streets outside. On the hillsides, he often talked to meetings of five, sometimes ten thousand. It might be curiosity, but curiosity didn't make those shrewd, tough, reticent mill-folk cheer and shout, even throw their hats in the air.

The day of the election. 18 July saw much diversion all over the constituency by the suffragettes who were posted at each polling booth. They were very generous with their literature and persistent with their requests to the voters to use their crosses against the Government. One elderly elector refused a bill offered to him and was promptly reminded that his mother was a woman. 'That is so' he replied. 'but she was a good deal better than many of the present generation for she stayed at home and mended her stockings'. The suffragette protested that she hadn't any holes in her stockings and threatened to take off her boots as proof. One suffragette pleaded with an elderly man. 'You'll vote against the Liberal candidate won't you?' at the same time thrusting into his hands the inevitable bill. The document was screwed up and thrown to the ground and the voter almost terrified the suffragette with the ejaculation 'Aum leet geen, if tha' meddles wi' me aw'll sam thi up!'

Much merriment was caused by a beshawled women who joined the suffragettes at Marsden. She shouted excitedly that 'every women ought to have the vote whether she was a widow or unmarried or what the ***** she was'.

According to the *Colne Valley Guardian* even the wily policeman did not escape the vigil of the suffragettes. One officer of the law, being offered a printed document, replied that he had already got one. 'Well take another', said the fair pleader, 'and don't forget to run the right man in'.

The *Guardian* even went to the lengths of publishing a poem on the subject:

There once was a suffragette fair
Who, the vote with man wanted to share,
She looked lonesome and meek
But could spend by the week
Lively Parliament when she gathers there.

When the election result was announced it was seen that the suffragettes were rewarded in that the candidate closest to their cause won, Victor Grayson was returned. In his post-election address Grayson stated, 'I must not forget this. we stand for equality, human equality, sexual equality and I thank the women for what they have done to keep the Liberal out'.

Grayson later said that women had won the election for him. Hannah Mitchell says of Huddersfield, 'It was a wonderful experience, like putting a match to a ready-built fire. The Yorkshire women rose to the call and followed us in hundreds'. She adds 'My cousin who lived there all her life said to me years later "never was there such a time in Huddersfield".'

EXTRACT FROM: *AN ORDINARY LIFE, 1861-1924*

Florence Lockwood (1932)

New Year's Eve, 1902

It is comfortable in the snug parlour at Black Rock and the season conducive to reflection. It was a year ago that I first met Josiah Lockwood.

The wind is raging without and the snow inches deep, yet every now and then we are subject to the incursion of 'Guisers' or 'Mummers'. 'Tis the custom on New Year's Eve in these parts; the boys dress up as girls and the girls as boys, they wear masks or blacken their faces. On the doorstep they sing 'Behold! Behold! Another rolling year has swiftly passed away.'

I have already fetched in three parties of these humorous little objects. They were astonished at such a warm reception, and quite nonplussed when, after they had repeated their quaint ditty with cracked, husky voices, Josiah said 'Sing another lads!'

The blackened faces and masks, which had been enjoying a view of the sanctified quarters of the master of Black Rock, were suddenly at this request diverted from the warm walls, pictures and curtains, the massive bunch of mistletoe, the open piano, and the black cat by the glowing hearth, to look at each other for inspiration. As last they said 'Nay, we cannot.' 'Sing another, that's good lads! Are you lads or lasses?' 'Lads! She's a girl,' pointing to a small shivering one. 'What do they call thee?' Josiah reckons to know all the neighbours, but, after a recital of their names, he had to enquire further. 'Whose lads are you?' Number one was just beginning, 'My father is...' but Josiah suddenly held up his hand to stop further disclosures of identities. 'Come! give us another song'.

This time, much to the astonishment of her company, the hungry looking little girl sang 'Farewell, Manchester', an old Jacobite song, with the correct tremor in her clear young voice that thrilled us. 'Good Lads! I am pleased with you,' and Josiah produced coppers and showed them the door.



Florence Lockwood

Christmas Eve 1907

A dull dark day but fully taken up with letter writing and decorating the house with mistletoe and holly and enlarging the dining table, for at tea time the board will be graced by some of Josiah's brothers' children. I say 'graced,' but by experience I know that they will scarcely do that, for they are frightened and answer in monosyllables and titter only at their own unspoken jokes; yet, such is the traditional force of Christmas time, I was glad to make the house feel, smell and look festive, and kiss their cold little faces in the hall under the mistletoe as they came in from the dark, dripping and boisterous night.

When they had left, Josiah took a little tour round, but soon returned. 'Eh, love! It is cold to-night, there will be snow before morning. Come, let us go to bed.' I closed my book and followed him. I felt a little sentiment would not come amiss. Have you been thinking of the old year? What have been the principal events? 'The new sheds at the mill, love and by this time next year we shall have a new chimney and an extra boiler, I hope.'

...Then our thoughts went off, wondering what the next year might hold for us, until the carollers, a large muster from the Clough Chapel, bade us 'Awake and salute the happy morn.' Was music ever more enjoyed! Breaking the stillness of the frosty night, unsought, while we were lying undistracted in the dark chamber. How do the tuning fork and the primitive carol sung by these hill folk compare with the garish concert hall, the orchestra tuning up and lavishing its intricacies upon us? It is like a simple meal, when one is hungry, compared with a Lord Mayor's banquet on a jaded stomach. I wish they would sing on but, alas! the next item is the music of many feet clattering on the hard ground, and much chatter. But surely they return? Nay, love! It is the Church lot this time. Give them five shillings in t' morn.'

With thanks to Janette Martin

BUYING A STATION

Clifford Stephenson (1991)

As that 'ornament to the town' undergoes yet another facelift, Clifford Stephenson recalls its acquisition by Huddersfield Corporation 23 years ago.

In 1968 Huddersfield achieved still another municipal 'first' by buying its Railway Station; not merely a station but an exceptionally fine one; in John Betjeman's words 'the most splendid station facade in England'.

The story behind the purchase began several years earlier when the North Eastern Regional Board of British Rail, invited and entertained senior members of Huddersfield Council to a splendid dinner at the George Hotel. It was soon apparent that their hospitality was less inspired by brotherly love than by ulterior motive. Put bluntly they wanted to 'soften us up'. This was the period when British Rail, following the Beeching Report, was doing all it could to save money and increase income. One way of increasing income was to capitalize on the huge quantity of land and property owned, by selling or leasing some, to property developers - who were making fortunes out of the 'property boom'.



Huddersfield Railway Station, 16 August 1979. Photographer unknown.
Scan courtesy of *Huddersfield Exposed*.

Some railway genius - or vandal - came up with the suggestion that if Huddersfield station front and administrative buildings - admittedly larger than the traffic justified - were demolished, the cleared land together with the forecourt, also owned by British Rail, would make a splendid site for which developers of offices or shops would pay a very substantial sum. Their problem was that to do this would require planning permission from the Corporation - hence their 'sweethearting' of our members. They were on very stony ground and their hospitality was wasted.

Realising that British Rail were willing to sell the station buildings, I canvassed the idea that the Corporation should buy them, amongst members of the Council - but with little success. Asked what we could do with it I suggested that it would make an excellent Industrial Museum, which could include preserved relics of the steam age, standing on the track nearest platform 1. Admittedly my arguments were idealistic rather than utilitarian and perhaps not surprisingly failed to inspire support at the time.

But the fates were kind, they provided another opportunity to revive my suggestion in 1968, the year of the centenary of Huddersfield's Incorporation as a Borough. To celebrate the centenary, the Finance Committee reserved £100,000 to provide some kind of permanent memorial, not defined. Suggestions were invited; many were received; each in turn was rejected on the grounds of unsuitability, impracticability or cost. Only one found general favour, that to provide three memorial seats in each Ward of the Borough, the location of each to be decided by the Ward Councillor; and this was put in hand; but it only used up about a quarter of the available fund. No further suggestions being forthcoming I, somewhat tentatively, put forward again my earlier proposal to buy the station, this time, in the absence of a rival alternative and with time running out for a decision to be made, it was agreed that purchase be negotiated. Shortly afterwards three of us met Mr Fiennes, the manager of British Rail North East Region, in the Mayor's parlour, to discuss the purchase. I never took part in a transaction so speedy and amicable. Fiennes was a character of determination, vision and decision and within half an hour - subject to the usual checks by officers and legal departments - the deal was struck. For a mere £52,650 Huddersfield became the owner of the station front buildings, platform 1 and the rail track adjoining it, together with the forecourt - now used for car parking. I think it was a bargain financially and architecturally, a treasure beyond price.

As a temporary measure the station building was leased back to British Rail for twenty-one years and the forecourt turned into the car park.

The rent received from British Rail for use of the buildings and the income from car parking, together, now more than pay the debt charges incurred by the purchase, so, in effect Huddersfield became the owner of this splendid monument of the great railway age, for nothing, and in the process notched up another 'first' as the only town to own its main railway station.

EXTRACT FROM: SLAITHWAITE NOTES: PAST AND PRESENT

John Sugden (1905)

To-day all is progress and prosperity in the town, and in a district so busy that nearly every mill is working overtime, and many night and day. Indeed, just now, the Colne Valley is the marvel of all who have the pleasure to see it, or the happy acquaintance of any of the sons and daughters of this prosperous neighbourhood. Wages are fairly good, and the people are learning more sense than to spend it all foolishly. They will have their enjoyment, but in a rational way, and who can blame them after the long hours of hard labour.

The youngsters will get a rest from the school, and kind mothers will fill their stockings with good things. Christmas cheer will abound everywhere. Sunday schools will have their great day, speeches will be made, pieces said, and anthems sung to commemorate the great festival. The churches and homes will be decorated, and the hearts of the people (young and old) made glad because of the birth of a Saviour to redeem the world.

On Christmas Eve Slaithwaite perhaps sends out more waits than any other town of its size. All places of worship, clubs of any kind (and they are numerous and many), so that the inhabitants have a lively time, and in some cases are kept awake on the happy morn with mixed feelings not always Christian. But what of the old? Well, had much the same, with the vast difference of the age, much less in population, and the people then not over-stocked with money. The children had less in their stockings, and the men and women fewer coppers in their pockets; but it was a great day, well observed there on the hills and in the valleys.

Going over the hills on Saturday, what a change one found! The dear old cottages of a former generation were deserted and boarded up. What a tale of love, life, and death they could tell if only some kind one would find a tongue for them to talk of the past.

Take the Lingards side. What a tell-tale at Fox Stone Edge, once the home of the honey bee, which gathered this sweet morsel every day from the wild moors adjoining, where the happy farmer lived and made out his busy life with hand-loom weaving. There was a little dam on the site of the present Deer Hill reservoir, and a spring of fresh water, which the lads and lasses used to drink in summer, along with that richer draught which bound them one in after life, remembering the catty days they had with one another while musing on these scenes, the dear old lanes, the quiet footpaths, the river banks, the old friends, and the pleasant reminiscences of the past. I was rudely awakened by the sight of a hearse. 'Who goes there?' says I. 'John Meal' is the answer, and I am reminded of another landmark gone for ever.

Ah, John Meal, another Lingards lad in early days, the mate and co-worker of the lamented and respected Mr. Samuel Sugden, of Springfield. In early days they worked together at Upper Mill - the long hours of the then miserable factory days, when the ways were rude and the wages little.

At Upper Mill lived in a cottage old Mr. Haigh, a remarkable character in more ways than one, from whom sprung the Haighs, of Quarmby and Colne Bridge. The crutch was an effective weapon for disorderly lads, and the billy roller handy when cardings were left to run in. It was here that poor Samuel Sugden had to go without dinner. His brother John, when a mere child, had gone a-hunting with Walter Barker, instead of obeying the instructions of a kind mother, who had gone out charing. The instructions were that the little brother was to put a pint of water to a pint of milk; boil up the same, and then pour it into a quart can, into which the fond parent had broken a penny cake, with a little salt and pepper; this part done before going to her early matin of hard work to help to feed her dear and numerous progeny. Sam missed his humble dinner that day, but happily lived to have many a better, and to get into that position that he was able and ever ready to give a dinner to a wandering hrother who might in want be passing by.

But to come back to this old Upper Mill. It had many characteristics. One was that the wheelwrights had part of their wage in food. One of these was very particular, and got a name which stuck to him for life, and that was 'Broth.' It came about this way: It was the custom to have broth, pudding, beef, vegetables, bread, cheese, and ale. This man above mentioned objected to the broth. Then, said Mr. Haigh, no broth, no pudding; no pudding, no beef. This drastic ultimatum, it is said, so settled the disinclination that the hesitating one fell to with the whole course, but left him a by-name which was not over pleasant to the old gentleman, especially when he had had a little too much beer. Otherwise he was a hard-working, honourable, and upright man, whose greatest fault was strong language, to which he was far too often provoked.

It was here also that John Meal got a name more common to him than his own. The boys playing at leap-frog in the meal-time were often very boisterous, and not always over jannock to avoid mischief and to act square. John said to one of his companions, 'Now, Tom, set a fair back, and pull thi nobbin in'; and by this (without the slightest offence) the man was known through life. In early days he was connected with Bolthead Sunday School; in middle life had great admiration for the late Charles Bradlaugh; later on sympathised with the Labour movement on behalf of his brother; he inclined to the Wesleyans in religion, to which his family are closely attached.

He died on Friday (getting on in life), and they buried him on Saturday, with the deep regret of his dear relatives and numerous friend.

IN THE PICTURE (LONGLEY WOODS)

Patricia Ann Dyson (1997)

One of Longley's greatest assets is the bluebell wood, and although it seems such a permanent feature of the landscape now, it was only planted 130 years ago. The hillside once looked very different, as we can see from a picture painted a decade or more before the trees were planted.

In 1849, the artist William Cowen set up his easel by the side of a footpath leading from Lowerhouses Lane to the King's Mill, and painted a landscape of fields and lanes, and distant views of Huddersfield. The lane before him, bordered by stone walls and complete with horse-drawn cart, was Channel Lane. This branched off Dog Kennel Bank just above the top house and converged with Cocker Lane (Squirrel Ditch) and the original King's Mill Lane at the bridge over the Channel Dike stream. At the point where the lane starts going downhill towards the stream, a footpath branches off to the left. This went across the hillside to the farm known as Mount Pleasant and thence to Wood Lane and the farm called Bank Gate. Both houses are long gone, and tile cobbled entry to Bank Gate now leads to three new houses. The deeds for the middle house still specify a right of way for farm animals. Before 1850, Wood Lane had been known as Longley Clough, and as its present name first appears about 1853 well before the trees were planted - it was probably named for the Wood family, whose mediaeval Hall still stands at the top (much refurbished).



William Cowen (1849), *View of Huddersfield*. Image courtesy of Kirklees Museums & Galleries.

Sir John William Ramsden put forward a proposal to reroute this old footpath to the mill in 1860. He wanted it moved farther along the hillside towards Wood Lane, and his agent wrote to him in 1859 confirming that the proposal shortened the journey

to the mill by 196 yards. Although it probably suited his purposes to present the change as beneficial to his tenants, I think that Sir John was working to his own agenda, and had far-reaching plans for his ancestral home and its surroundings, all designed to ensure maximum privacy and seclusion for the new mansion he intended to build. A mansion to properly reflect his status before the citizens of the town he owned. A meeting of ratepayers was held in Almondbury Church vestry to discuss the full proposals, which sought to close three footpaths and open two new ones, all in the immediate area of Longley Hall. It is, perhaps, some reflection on the decline in the mill's importance, that only four people turned up. At this time, the miller was complaining of insufficient water in the river to operate the mill, and lack of capital to buy in grain from outside. Already large parts of the mill had been given over to the woollen industry. One of the ratepayers, a Mr. Brook, was there to complain that the new path passed right in front of his house. Mr. Hathorne, Sir John's agent, foresaw no problem in a small deviation.

Mr. Jacob, law clerk to Moldgreen Local Board, was also concerned about the changes - the board being legally responsible for paving and repairing the roads. His enquiries into the legality of the closures prompted Mr. Hathorne to write in a letter to Sir John 'It is very evident that Mr. Jacob must be watched very narrowly, otherwise he will endeavour to defeat your wishes.' Sir John triumphed, albeit at his own expense, and paid £177 8s 9d for the work to be done. A small price, for his plans included a private carriage drive from Smithy Lane to the Hall, and the old footpath to the mill would have crossed it!

The path dealt with, Sir John began discussing with his agent details of his plans for



Postcard showing Longley Park, Huddersfield. Published as part of the 'British Mirror Series'. Scan courtesy of *Huddersfield Exposed*.

tree planting around the Hall. At this point the vicar of Almondbury, the Rev. Lewis Jones, put forward an idea which must have been very unwelcome to Sir John. The Rev. Jones saw a need for a new church to serve the people of Longley, Moldgreen and Dalton, and suggested a site immediately in front of the Hall, just north of the road junction at the bridge. Moreover, his plan envisaged Sir John opening up his proposed carriage drive on Sundays for access to the church. It comes as little surprise that the plan was rejected on the grounds that the site was inconvenient for tenants from Moldgreen and Dalton! In reality, the site was one Sir John had already designated for tree planting. The letter turning down the scheme was dated 8 February 1860, and by 14 February, Sir John Kaye had offered a site for the church at Moldgreen. It was on the left side of Wakefield Rd, 180 yards beyond the Ivy Green crossroads. A happy coincidence, at the very least! It did not placate the Rev. Jones, however, who dismissed it as no use to the scattered hamlets around Longley and New Laithe, and put forward a compromise. He suggested that the school at Lowerhouses be set up for divine worship, and a clergyman engaged to work the district at a stipend of not less than £100. This scheme went ahead, and finally led to the creation of St. Mary's Church in 1888, when the school inspectors began to complain of the cumbersome church furniture.

Although the Rev. Jones supported his plan for a new church by saying that the tenants around Longley were almost without any means of religious worship and instruction, this wasn't strictly true. Early in 1863, the schoolteacher at Lowerhouses noted that scarcely any of the children attended church, but nearly all of them attended dissenting schools on Sundays. The Rev. Jones probably intended to try and remedy this situation, and as St. Mary's was converted from the Primitive Methodist Sunday School, one might say that he succeeded.

In 1866 Sir John William seized the chance to close all the remaining lanes and footpaths around Longley Hall. A new road had been suggested from Almondbury to Huddersfield, the present day Somerset Road. The land needed was owned by Sir John William and this gave him his bargaining counter. In a letter dated September 1866, Sir John writes

The stopping up of Channel Lane and the footpaths should be arranged first. The Local Board, and inhabitants generally, will be much more amenable while I have the power of giving or withholding so great a public boon as this new road would be.

In the same letter he says that he will not commit himself to the new road unless it can be 'macadamised' and not paved (macadam being the cheaper option).

In another letter to his agent he stresses that he is mainly interested in improving communications on his Huddersfield Estate, and, but for the arrangement over the lanes and paths, he would not have considered improving his Almondbury Estate for many years to come.

The lanes he wished to stop were Channel Lane (462 yards long), and the road around Ashinghurst (858 yards long). In addition, there were 2,367 yards of footpath to the west of Smithy Lane, to be closed, and 858 yards of footpath to the east. Sir John was primarily concerned with the closure of those to the west, as they were the ones around Longley Hall. So eager was he to get his plans ready for the next Quarter Sessions that he offered extra remuneration to the clerk to have them ready in time. Major Graham, Sir John William's agent, advised him that part of the Public Notice would read 'The footpath from Channel Lane, by Mount Pleasant, will be called in the Notice 'a reputed public footpath' – which will guard against the admission of its really being public.'

He put the proposals before the Almondbury and Moldgreen Local Boards. Almondbury Board gave the plans 'heartly approval', Moldgreen Board was more difficult to persuade. Major Graham wrote to Sir John William 'But it was a work of some difficulty to obtain the approval and concurrence of the Moldgreen Board'. No doubt Almondbury was very anxious that nothing should stand in the way of their new, improved access to Huddersfield, and the Lane closures were a good mile away. Moldgreen, however, would have little benefit from the new road. Indeed, Major Graham had to exceed his authority and had to promise road improvements which would cost Sir John William an extra £300 in order to gain their approval. As a sop, Major Graham was directed to allow the footpath from Jockey Hall to the new road to remain open. As a further sweetener, Sir John William indicated that he was willing to replace the old wooden King's Mill Bridge with a permanent structure. Then, at a special meeting on 26th September 1866 Moldgreen Local Board decided to cooperate with Sir John William, and in January 1867 they finally agreed to the plans.

At the same meeting they decided to ask Sir John William to give them land for a recreation ground, as some compensation for the loss of roads and footpaths. In September of that year the legal moves for closure were completed and Sir John William finally achieved the secluded setting for his mansion that he desired. It had taken him seven years.

His plans having gone so well, by July 1868 Sir John William was putting more new roads out to tender. These would accommodate people living on the far side of his now private estate. One road ran direct from King's Mill Bridge to Stile Common Lane, with a branch up Whitegate Road. When this road met Wood Lane it turned right and crossed the little ravine, following the course of the present Stile Common Road, to where it now meets Newsome Road. Part of Whitegate Road merely needed widening as it had formed part of the old lane around Ashinghurst. As you go down the road today, the original line of the lane can be seen branching off to the right. In the September of 1868 Major Graham suggested an intermediate road off Whitegate Road in order to open up even more land for building purposes. He calculated that for an outlay of £300 Sir John William could expect £100 a year in rents. Lower Whitegate Road thus became part of the plan, and our present familiar road system began.

THE CHRISTMAS MARKET IN HUDDERSFIELD

Anon., 24 Dec 1873, *Huddersfield Chronicle*

For many years past Huddersfield has been noted for the excellency of its supply of beef, mutton, pork, and other substantial of life, and particularly so at Christmas time, when every butcher, game dealer, and others vie with each other as to who shall not only have the best show in quantity, but also in quality. This year, however, has in both these respects exceeded all its predecessors, for whether it be the carcasses of oxen, sheep, calves, or pigs, nothing hitherto has approached the show made this festive season. Nor has the game been a whit behindhand, for never did such an immense quantity of hares, rabbits, geese, turkeys, snipes, pheasants, ducks, and other game arrive here as has been witnessed during the latter end of last and the beginning of this week. The grocers and other shopkeepers have also kept up their reputation for their neatness in the method of dressing their windows and the first-rate quality of articles exposed for sale.

In meat, Mr. Joseph Kaye, of Victoria Street, has a splendid show of beef, the best being a splendid prize oxen, bred and fed by the Duke of Cleveland, and which weighed over one hundred stone, the quality being unexceptionable. Large numbers of persons, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, inspected the show yesterday. In addition to this one, Mr. Kaye had several other animals equally good, but not so heavy, together with a large number of South Down sheep, each over 100lbs. in weight, and also a number of well-fed calves, reared by farmers in the neighbour hood - Mr. John Hudson, whose beef was well and solidly fed, and who slaughtered ten fine animals, several of them prize ones all Scots, and which weighed on the average 72 stone each, had also a fine show. Twenty fine South Downs, each 100lbs. weight, were also killed for him, the quality of which was unexceptionable. In this shop was also exhibited an extraordinary fit sheep of the Lincolnshire breed, the carcass of which weighed 224lbs., and one leg from it 29lbs. This was ticketed as follows:- 'Shearling wether; first prize, Birmingham, first prize, Sleaford. Bred and fed by John Byron, Esq., Kirnby Green, Sleaford, Lincolnshire.' A number of well-fed calves in the immediate locality also graced this shop. At the establishment of Mr. William Henry Kaye there was an abundant display of excellently-fed, useful beef, the animals, before slaughtering, averaging 64 stone weight each. About a dozen well-fed Lincolnshire sheep, fed by Mr. Walton, and averaging 100lbs. each, were exhibited, and found ready customers when cut up. There was a number of first-rate calves, bred and fed by Mr. John Haigh, of Golcar. Mr. Peter Kaye exhibited several first-rate Scotch animals that produced excellent and useful beef, besides a number of very fine sheep, fed by Mr. Joe Sheard, of Hopton, that weighed 100lbs. each, and several good calves, fed by Mr. B. Hirst, of Thurston Land. Mr. Thomas Sheard has an excellent show of good, useful beef, mutton, &c., and so has several other butchers in the Shambles. Mr. W.W. Abby, Kirkgate, has, according to his former efforts, again a fine show of veal, and a goodly number of calves, from Cheshire, gracing his shop. A large number of first-class pork pigs, from the same county, were

also in the possession of Mr. Abby, the show of which was marred by the inclemency of the weather, as was also the exhibition of the finest supply of Cheshire geese ever consigned to him, but which were mostly cleared out last night, notwithstanding the high prices demanded. Mr. Ellis, Westgate, and Mr. Chapman, West Parade, exhibited extensive shows of first-class beef, mutton, &c., which were well patronised. Other butchers in the town, both on Saturday and yesterday, produced fine displays of useful flesh meat of all kinds, which met ready sale among the working-classes.

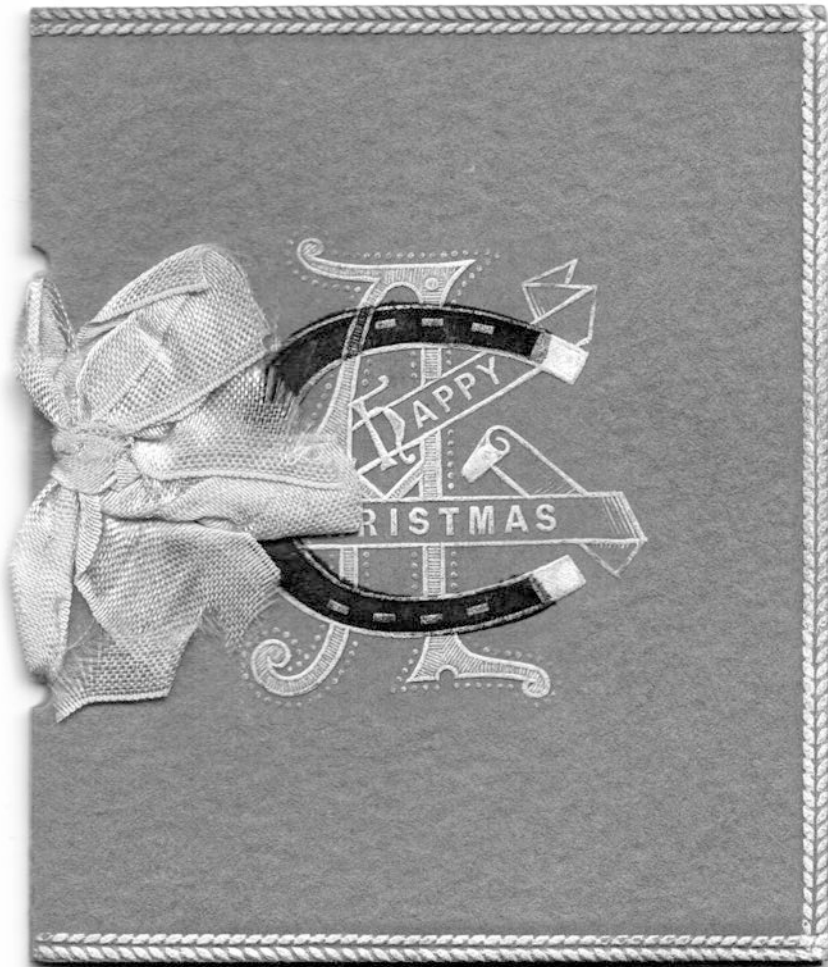
The game dealers in the town have surpassed all their former efforts in catering for the wants of the increasing population, their supplies of hares, rabbits, turkeys, ducks, &c., being on a much larger scale than ever was known before. The finest and most extensive display was at the shops of Mr. Joseph Bradley and Mr. John Henry Wood, Victoria Street, the fronts of whose shops were profusely decorated with evergreens. &c., from the eaves to the ground; at the same time there being rows of splendid turkeys, hares, pheasants, woodcocks, snipe, rabbits, and other poultry, while the shop boards groaned under the weight of Cheshire, Irish, and other geese, dressed rabbits, fowls, &c., for all of which there was yesterday an extraordinary demand. At the shop of Mary North, Westgate, there was a valuable exhibition of game, geese, &c. The hares being of superior quality, all of which were from Cheshire, and although the prices were somewhat high, the demand for them was very great. In other articles, such as pheasants, partridges, ducks, rabbits, &c., Mrs. North fully maintained her reputation for excellence in quality and extent of choice. Mr. John Ellis, Westgate, also produced an excellent assortment of the same kind of supplies, and was most liberally patronised. Mr. Muir, of the Beast Market, both on Saturday and yesterday, had a splendid assortment of hares, rabbits, geese, turkeys, &c., many of the latter being the finest exhibited in the town, some averaging from sixteen to twenty pounds each, and two of them - exceedingly fine birds - weighed together forty-three pounds and a half. The shop was also most tastefully decorated, under the superintendence of Mrs. Muir, which had a very pretty effect.

The pork butchers have this year outshone all their former efforts, both as to size, quantity, and quality. Mr. C. Bernin, Cross Church Street, slaughtered twenty-five well-fed bacon pigs, averaging from fourteen to sixteen stone each, all of which were of extremely fine quality, and two enormous prize pigs, each weighing about forty stone, the dressing and decorations of which were neat, chaste, and ornamental. The finest - if there was any difference - was bred by the Earl of Ellesmere and fed by Colonel Fenton, banker, Rochdale. The other was bred and fed by Mr. John Wainwright, high bailiff to Colonel Fenton. In addition, a large number of sucking pigs were on view. The shop window had been artistically and gracefully decorated by Mrs. Bernin, and exhibited an enormous number of pork pies of all sizes, tempting to the eye, and no doubt to the palate. For Mr. Henry Falck, Market Walk, no fewer than 28 pigs, principally from 14 to 18 stone, were slaughtered, and the quality was equal to the size. In addition a monster grunter, bred and fed by Mr. J.W. France, manufacturer, Brockholes, was exhibited, which, by estimation, weighed from 43 to 50 stone, and was highly dressed and prettily

decorated. Each side of this pig was flanked by two magnificent pigs, fed and bred by Mr. Garside, of Birchincliff, which weighed about 26 stone each, and were admired by hundreds who saw them. Several suckers were also in the possession of Mr. Falck.

Mr. Sheppard, King Street, had 24 first-class pigs, ranging from 14 up to 45 stone each, all of them very pretty pigs. Among the number were two of the pure small kind, bred from stock of Mr. C.F. Hallas, Manchester Road, who for this breed has obtained no fewer than 10 silver cups and two silver medals - three being obtained this year - all of which were yesterday exhibited in Mr. Sheppard's window. Among the remainder were four other prize pigs from Cumberland, weighing about 40 stone each. A large and choice assortment of pork pies was also exhibited in the shop window, which was neatly decorated. A fine young pig about four stone weight, of the Prince of Wales pure breed, was exhibited in the window, and attracted much attention.

The shop of Mr. George Croxton, fruitist, Westgate, was decorated with the choicest assortment of the most delicious fruit ever exhibited in Huddersfield. The exhibition included magnificent specimens of English and foreign fruit, especially grapes, pineapples, Jersey pears, American apples, St. Michael oranges, &c. There were also a large assortment of French boxes. Cosaques, bonbons, &c. Altogether, the display was rich in the extreme, while the perfume from the delicious productions was almost overpowering. At the establishment of H. Forsyth, New Street, there was a splendid show of both English and foreign fruit, together with a display of German, Italian, and other goods. Among the specialities were some fine and handsomely-grown English pineapples, grapes, melons, Jersey pears, Italian pears, French fancy boxes, bon-bons, crystalised fruits, and Cosaques of every description. In other departments Mr. Forsyth had a splendid display of German dried tongues, sausages, and Wiltshire smoked chins. One speciality in this establishment is the great display of English ox tongues, both smoked and fresh out of pickle, with an endless choice of German stock, York, and Norfolk turkeys, geese, pheasants, American apples, &c., &c. The only drawback to a magnificent show was the unpleasant weather, which prevented any outdoor show, and proved much worse to shopkeepers than if it had been a thorough downpour of rain.



Christmas 1899

Marie L. Rippon
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Happiness during Xmas
and the New Year.

From
The Laurels
Mount Joy Road
Huddersfield

THE LOCAL HISTORIAN AS ACTIVIST

Some Belated Thoughts on the Life and Times of D.F.E. Sykes

Cyril Pearce (2000)

British culture has a curiously ambivalent attitude to intellectuals and scholars. We seem to prefer them to stay in their academic cloisters while, at the same time, condemning them for being unworldly - as if we hadn't wished that on them in the first place. Then, if they come out and engage with the world - as if to confound the stereotype - they make us uncomfortable and we wish them back in the academy again. And yet the scholars keep trying, often at great cost to themselves and their reputations. This seems to have been particularly true of historians and especially of those with a radical, not to say revolutionary, turn of mind. Given my own leanings, the names that spring first to mind in this connection are from that rich vein of post-war Marxist scholarship - Raphael Samuel, Eric Hobsbawm, Christopher Hill, Brian Simon and Edward Thompson, while not forgetting their equally active pre-war counterparts in G.D.H. Cole, Raymond Postgate, and R.H. Tawney. Feminist scholarship in the closing decades of the twentieth century has given us Sheila Rowbotham, Jill Liddington and many more. That is not to say that Historians of the political centre and 'right' have not been equally engaged - I am thinking of Hugh Trevor-Roper, Maurice Cowling and even David Irving. The lists, from whatever persuasion, could be much longer and the stories of academic endeavour set aside or affected in some other way, by engagement with real-world matters, multiplied in spite of cultural predispositions.



D. F. E. SYKES.

Undated portrait of Daniel Frederick Edward Sykes (1856-1920)

So much we probably know. What is less well known is the extent to which this has occurred in the rather less dramatic world of local history. I was struck by these thoughts recently when preparing work with colleagues on the subject of Huddersfield's nineteenth and early twentieth century local historians. The figure of Canon Hulbert looms pretty large here. His scholarly concerns to give an account of the history of the parish of Almondbury or the Church in Slaithwaite did not prevent him from being thoroughly engaged with his church and its role or with the prevailing politics of popular education. Of course, we shouldn't really be surprised at this. After all, the vast majority of local historians are, and always have been, amateurs who have to pursue their studies

in their own time. In a sense, they have no option but to be engaged with the world. But the world of work is not quite what I mean. That isn't what the major scholars were about. In fact, for them, an engagement with the world outside the academy was about getting away from their working world. No, what I am chiefly concerned about is with the world of what we call 'public life'. In simple terms we might call it 'politics' but that has too narrow a set of connotations in the way we currently use it. 'Public life', although a slightly old-fashioned term, is an evocation of an altogether broader range of concerns.

If we look again at Huddersfield's local historians, notwithstanding Canon Hulbert, the scholar who immediately comes to mind, above all others, is D. F. E. Sykes. He is an almost classic model of the politically and socially committed intellectual. His involvement in the life of the real world almost destroyed him.

I probably speak for many local historians of my generation - and others - when I say that D.F.E. Sykes' work was probably my own first introduction to a thoroughly scholarly account of the history of Huddersfield. His *History of Huddersfield and its Vicinity* first published in 1898 or his *History of the Colne Valley* published in 1906 remain the authoritative touchstones for subsequent historians. Later one came across the much less well known Sykes the novelist - *Ben o' Bill's the Luddite* (1898); *Dorothy's Choice* (1904); *Miriam* (1912); *Sister Gertrude* (1908); *Tom Pinder, Foundling* (1906) - and even later, Sykes the temperance pamphleteer and campaigner. But it was the story of Sykes the committed local activist which caught the eye and roused the curiosity. He needs a biographer.

If this piece can stir someone to take on the job then it will have served its purpose. His writings and researches apart, our knowledge of Sykes' life is a matter of tantalising fragments. But they are fragments which are far from dead or dry. D.F.E. himself has seen to that. In two accounts of his life given on separate occasions and to very different audiences he has created confusion and carefully laid down smokescreens to obscure important details. There is, at times, a sense that, in being compelled to re-invent himself in his later life he had to re-adjust the story of his earlier years to match. This only adds to the fascination and to the half-understood feeling that D.F.E. was something special. There is a strong sense of the tragic about him. There is also more than a hint of '...if only' - if only he hadn't done that or said this, perhaps he could have done more, been more, made a bigger splash in his home town and, who knows, beyond it. In the issue which followed Sykes' death, the editor of the *Colne Valley Guardian* chose to lead his editorial column - Mr. D.F.E. SYKES, and to comment, 'The Colne Valley has lost one of its best known personalities in 'Deffie' Sykes. Of no man could it more truthfully be said, 'Of all sad words of tongue or pen. The saddest are these. 'It might have been''

Some of the essentials of his life are not hard to find. Daniel Frederick Edward Sykes was born in Huddersfield in 1856. His father, Edwin Sykes, originally from Linthwaite, was a successful solicitor. According to D.F.E., his father's family originally came from

Upper Holme in Slaithwaite. The 1871 census records Edwin Sykes and his family living in Fitzwilliam Street: Edwin, 43, his wife, Eliza, 40, his mother-in-law Hannah Hudson, 75, and their four children, D. F. E. aged 15, Charlotte, 10, Matilda, 8 and Emma 7.

It is generally agreed that D. F. E. was a very bright child and, later a brilliant scholar and student. He attended Huddersfield College where he won both silver and gold medals. Later he went on to London University where he was awarded an LLB In 1877, after graduating he returned to Huddersfield to join his father's practice which was renamed 'Edwin Sykes and Son' in his honour. Shortly after this Edwin died suddenly, leaving D.F.E. to run the practice alone. For a man of his talents, even at the tender age of twenty-one, this seemed to present no problems. Indeed, he seemed set on course for a glittering legal career.

Along with his undoubted scholarship and burgeoning legal practice, D.F.E. had a strong and principled commitment to politics and to public life. He was in great demand as a lecturer on topical and political themes. His political views placed him on the 'left' of the Liberal Party where he was often described as an 'Extreme Radical'. He was a member of the Huddersfield Liberal 600, the Party's governing body in the town, and, from 1880 to 1883, represented the Almondbury Ward on Huddersfield Town Council.

The late 1870s and 1880s were turbulent times for Liberalism, locally and nationally. The party was heading for the division over the Irish Question, which culminated in 1886 in Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule. It was further divided by internal debates on social reform, which set the more conservative members against the radicals. D.F. E. was with the radicals. For the Liberal Party at this time there are numerous parallels with the savage internal divisions in the Labour Party in the 1980s which preceded the break-away formation of the Social Democratic Party. One of the key issues in this particular debate within Liberalism was how the party should respond to the aspirations of the industrial working class. The Party's principled commitment to widening the franchise and to freedom and opportunities for all made it the 'natural' home of working-class radicals. However, its equivocation on trade union matters and its persistent reluctance to select working class candidates for local or parliamentary elections contributed ultimately, in 1893, to the formation of the Independent Labour Party. More pointedly, Liberal employers' resistance to trade unions at local level undermined the party's claim to working class sympathy. D.F.E. seems to have been deeply involved in the debate which was stirred by these divisions. His relationship with fellow Liberals on the Town Council was, apparently, not always easy. According to John Sugden, then also a Liberal councillor, there was no mistaking which side D.F.E. was on.

He was a splendid speaker, had a facile pen, and was a great Radical, full of zeal on behalf of the working classes, wisely or unwisely exerted it is not for me to say, only to add that it was well meant.

On the Council '... he had many well-known battles on behalf of the people against the forces of retrogression ... and fluttered the dovescotes of the old Corporation'.

It was this charismatic and brilliant young radical who attracted Phyllis Bentley's attention when writing her novel *Inheritance*. A character easily recognised as D.F.E. but renamed Bamforth figures significantly in her story and, like D.F.E. himself, played a central role in the Weavers' Strike of 1883. For Joth Bamforth as for D.F.E. Sykes, the 1883 strike was a turning point in his life. In late 1881, D.F.E. had sunk his own money and a thousand pounds borrowed from his father-in-law into a publishing venture called the *Huddersfield and Colne Valley Radical*. A weekly newspaper later re-named the *Northern Pioneer*, it became a vehicle for D.F.E.'s own brand of radical Liberalism. This act alone was probably guaranteed to alienate the support of Huddersfield's well to do on whom D.F.E. relied for his work as a solicitor. However, it was his role in the 1883 Weavers' Strike which confirmed it. The 1883 Strike - some would argue it was a lockout - divided the community bitterly and quite dramatically. This is not the place to explore its detail but it is clear that the dispute represented the attempt by the fledgling Weavers' Union to assert its presence in the local textile industry and the masters' concerted effort to resist it. During the strike's eleven weeks, D.F.E.'s editorials constantly urged negotiations and condemned any signs of intransigence on either side. In his use of language and the power and clarity of his arguments, he was very obviously not out to make friends. Indeed, much of what he said and the way in which he said it was probably guaranteed to have the opposite effect. He was arguing for a standard of conduct, of rational debate and practical negotiation which was simply not recognised by either side.

There was more than a little arrogance about the way the twenty-seven-year-old Sykes behaved and it certainly does not seem to have endeared him to either masters or men. He even tried to intervene personally by addressing a workers' meeting at Castle Hill. The people there were not inclined to be lectured as to their conduct by this young lawyer and barracked him. Their union leaders had to plead with them to let him speak which eventually they did. But it was a studiously polite and noncommittal hearing he was eventually given and the intervention had no effect. If he could not persuade the weavers of the wisdom of his advice, he made no impression on the employers. He was publicly accused of taking the weavers' side, but he dismissed the suggestion with an editorial sweep of the pen. 'We have been accused in this contest of taking sides. We treat that accusation with contempt. We shall not even condescend to rebut it'. A week later, with high indignation he was rounding on the masters, while not sparing the Weavers' Union:

The masters do not mean to arbitrate. They mean to smash up the Weavers' Union. They have embarked on a certain enterprise. Goaded beyond endurance by the interference of the Weavers' Union, they formed one of their own which set before it one definite object, and that was, apparently, to shatter, nay to pulverise the Weavers' Union.

In his own account of the strike written for the *Colne Valley Guardian* in 1900, D.F.E. shows no sign of self-criticism and certainly makes no attempt to reappraise his role - rather the opposite. He claims to have attempted to play the honest go-between but

to have been betrayed by the intransigence of both sides. Within the same apologetics, however, he does unconsciously condemn himself. The story he tells is that while on holiday in Southport during the strike he happened to meet two prominent local textile manufacturers. They fell into conversation about the dispute and suggested that if they were able to talk directly to the union leader, Albert Shaw, they could have the matter resolved very quickly. Eager to help, Sykes offered himself as intermediary. He telegraphed Albert Shaw and invited him to join them in Southport. Shaw obliged and, according to D.F.E., over a good meal the major issues in the dispute were agreed and resolved. Unfortunately, back in Huddersfield, at the same time, the Mayor was trying to bring both sides together. He had the employers' representatives lined up, but no one could find Albert Shaw. Once it became known that D.F.E. had summoned him to Southport all the good work accomplished over dinner was destroyed and D.F.E.'s reputation for meddling was confirmed. He writes about this episode without any sense that in such a delicate matter he might, perhaps have contacted other key players to tell them what was going on. His own sense of the importance of his interventions is undimmed even after almost twenty years.

The *Pioneer* had been losing money from the day it was first published. D.F.E.'s editorial line during the strike did not help. Unfortunately, by the summer of 1883, the legal practice was also in difficulties. D.F.E. lays the blame at the door of the textile masters and those who depended on them.

Then a boycott began. The shopkeepers withdrew their advertisements from the *Pioneer*, and many manufacturing clients, and those who lived on them, fetched away their deeds and papers from my office. I had a little queue of men, day after day, asking for their bills to be made out and shaking me coldly by the hand and saying goodbye.

Shortly after the strike ended the paper was closed down and its presses sold. D.F.E. struggled to revive his legal practice but, apparently, without success. In May 1884 he left the district and, shortly after that, became the subject of a petition in bankruptcy.

This is where the most difficult and only partially understood chapter in his life began. In his account of D.F.E.'s life John Sugden says of this period: 'For years the poor fellow wandered about the country, suffered terrible hardships and great privations'. Parts of that story can be pieced together from a number of sources, but the sum of these fragments still leaves a host of unanswered questions. D.F.E.'s own account is contradictory. At his hearing in bankruptcy in 1899 he maintained that he left Huddersfield to go to Cornwall. Ostensibly this was to help a fellow radical Liberal in his campaign for a Cornish Parliamentary seat. We don't know the name of the candidate nor the seat he was to contest. He makes no mention of this in his 'Reminiscences' published in the *Colne Valley Guardian* a little over a year later. In that account his destination after leaving Huddersfield was Ireland where, he alleges, he stayed with numerous people but was fully involved in the Irish politics of the time. He makes no mention of his bankruptcy and yet, according to the 1899 bankruptcy hearing, it was while he

was in Cornwall that he was informed of the petition in bankruptcy. He did not return to Huddersfield to challenge the petition and was declared bankrupt. Apparently his debts totalled £9,870 14s. 6d. while his assets were estimated at only £558 12s. 1d. There was even a suggestion that he had misappropriated money held from the sale of a client's property. He consistently failed to respond to demands from the courts that he return to answer the petition. In 1886 a warrant was issued for his arrest but, fortunately for him, was never executed.

We know little of the detail of his journeys in the years after 1884. As an undischarged bankrupt he could not work as a solicitor. In 1890 he applied to the Law Society for a renewal of his certificate to practice but was refused. An undischarged bankrupt was not considered a fit and proper person to run a legal practice. D.F.E. maintained that he could not afford to petition the court to clear his name. Instead of working as a lawyer he had to find employment where he could. He turned to his skills as a writer and, occasionally, worked as a schoolteacher.

In the account he gave at his bankruptcy hearing D.F.E. went from Cornwall, to Ireland. He maintained that,

During the first two months he was in Ireland he maintained himself by writing for the Press, and the rest of the fifteen months he was there he was ill, and maintained by his brother in law. When he went to Ireland he had only enough to pay his fare from Bristol to Waterford where he had to pawn his watch and borrow money from a friend.

In his altogether more relaxed and discursive account of his stay in Ireland set out in his 'Reminiscences', he says nothing about the hardships but does relate the nature of his illness:

Of the North of Ireland I saw only enough to make me intensely dislike it. At Belfast I got typhoid fever; then rheumatic fever and when I could crawl I was ordered to the cold, rare climate of Canada.

While in Canada he claims to have made a living as a journalist. He also claims to have met prominent citizens and politicians and, when down on his luck, to have thrown himself on the mercy of fellow Freemasons. He says nothing at all about how long he was in Canada or, indeed where he left his wife and family all this time. But then, in these 'Reminiscences' he does not really tell his life story so much as use aspects of it as a thread around which he can weave anecdotes and travellers tales.

At some point between 1883 and 1893 - or it could have been earlier - D.F.E. appears to have become addicted to drink. Perhaps he was an alcoholic. It is impossible to say, but the evidence that drink had begun to affect him is very clear. Where and when his addiction began we do not know but by 1893 it had reached a critical point and had brought him to the verge of even greater ruin. The *Huddersfield Chronicle* for 4 November reported:

MR. D. F. E. SYKES SENT TO PRISON SHOCKING STORY OF NEGLECT OF CHILDREN

Beneath the headline was a sad account of D.F.E.'s decline. He was living in Grantham and had been a master at the Grammar School. His wife was working as a governess and he had charge of their two boys. His income, combined with that of his eldest son, was 22s. per week. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children had brought the case against him and one of their inspectors gave evidence.

Sykes had suffered from delirium tremens, and the inspector of the Society found on visiting the house that the children were insufficiently clothed and had no food except one piece of putrid mutton, the defendant being in bed suffering from the effects of drink. On subsequently visiting the house all the goods had gone. The eldest son told a pitiful tale as to how his father took his four shillings and buying 2d. worth of milk drank most of it himself mixed with whisky and brandy and when asked for some money to buy food he told them to do without. He and his brother had no food to eat for three days and during that time his father always came home unsteady.

D.F.E. was sentenced to two months imprisonment with hard labour. We don't know what happened next. Who took care of the boys, where D.F.E. was imprisoned or when he was released and where he went next are all tantalising questions for which, as yet, we have no answers. Nothing of this is mentioned in the 'Reminiscences'.

D.F.E. is amusingly 'frank' about having spent time in doss houses up and down the country. Indeed, he uses this as the basis for anecdotal accounts of the people he met and the bugs, lice and other small crawling or jumping creatures with which he became infested. He describes a kind of picturesque life on the tramp of the kind popularised by his more famous contemporary Jack London. It even became something of a genre at the hands of W.H. Davies in (1929) *Autobiography of a Super-Tramp* and George Orwell's *Road to Wigan Pier* and *Down and Out in London and Paris*. Unlike these better known exponents of the genre, within his vivid descriptions there is an almost pathetic attempt by D.F.E. to suggest that not all those he met on the road were the dregs of society and, therefore, by association, neither was he:

...these memories of mine carry me back mainly to folk I have met in the Common Lodging Houses of England: a Town Clerk, A Vicar, the expectant heir to a great title, a man who enjoys at least £20,000 a year, a butcher, a baker, a candlestick maker, all sorts and conditions of men. I can fancy the reader shrugging his respectable shoulders and exclaiming 'Hugh!' at this picture of the submerged tenth. But be gentle your reproaches; look leniently on these Ishmaels of society. They are not all sodden in sin or steeped in iniquity. They are not all there from choice. Degraded as they are, vicious and besotted, destitute and despairing as they appear, they have not always been there. The memory of happier and purer days is still fresh to many of them, but alas! In the stem fight between the forces of good and the forces of evil they fell victims to the latter. And what a fall!'

Having let this last 'And what a fall!' ring true of his own experience, D.F.E. concludes on a higher almost celebratory note:

... nothing is farther from the truth than to suppose that the life and the environment of the doss house is altogether devoid of interest or attraction to fallen and unfortunate humanity. There is a free, fraternal, aye, and even honourable Bohemianism about it which the untempted embodiment of domestic respectability knows nothing.

After the Grantham court appearance in November 1893, there is a gap of about four years before D.F.E. re-appears. Perhaps after leaving prison, this was the time he spent on the road. His own accounts are extremely vague on dates. It does appear that around about 1897 he returned to Huddersfield. Having said that, there is some doubt about how, why or even when he returned. In his 'Reminiscences' he writes simply of tramping back to Huddersfield on a whim:

It was a morning in the early May. I had spent the night in a doss and when the day dawned, occupied the wretched moments counting the bugs drop from the ceiling, 'I'll go back to Huddersfield', I cried to myself. But how? Well, there was only shank's mare for it.

The doss was, apparently, in the London area because his first stop on the way north was at Barnet where he threw himself on the generosity of a local schoolteacher 'with whom I had some acquaintance'.

The story told at his bankruptcy hearing in 1899 was rather different. It suggests that he was not in London at all but Cardiff and that it was the Cardiff Poor Law Guardians who had sent him home. As his home town, Huddersfield would have been the proper place for him to receive the indoor poor relief he needed. On the other hand, D.F.E. insisted that he was actually in Cardiff workhouse hospital and that it was he who had asked to be sent to Huddersfield. In terms of this tale, it is a subtle difference but a significant one for his self-esteem. But the story is totally different from that set out in his 'Reminiscences'. The one is the romantic story of the 'knight of the road' returning home after his wanderings, the other, a much grimmer story of the return of a derelict. It is understandable which story he preferred and which one he chose to tell to entertain the readers of the *Colne Valley Guardian*. In one he is a free, even 'Bohemian' spirit, in the other a pathetic wreck.

The 'Reminiscences' end with his return to Huddersfield. The rest of the story has to be pieced together from other sources. Supported by a number of old friends, John Sugden among them, he began the difficult process of rebuilding his life. In 1899 he finally returned to the Bankruptcy Court in an attempt to secure his discharge. He was desperate to apply once more for his certificate to practice as a solicitor. His discharge was not granted and, as far as we know, he never practised law again.

Instead of the law he turned increasingly to his writing. In 1898, the year before his ap-

pearance in the Bankruptcy Court, he had published his *History of Huddersfield and its Vicinity*. It was dedicated to Thomas Brooke of Armitage Bridge House and funded by subscription. In the following year, 1899, with George Henry Walker, he published *Ben O' Bill's*. He became a regular contributor to the *Colne Valley Guardian* with his 'FRAGMENTS OF LOCAL HISTORY'. Persistent anecdotal evidence suggests that this set the patterns for the rest of his life. He spent his time balancing research and writing against going door-to-door to secure subscriptions or to sell his books. In spite of the hardships of this hand-to-mouth existence, perhaps with the help of family and friends, he was finally able to settle down. At first, it seems, he lived in Huddersfield but then, by stages and over time, he made his way to Slaithwaite and then to Marsden. At what point he was re-united with his family is not clear, but by the time of his death in 1920, he and his wife were living together in quiet respectability.

The evidence is too vague to say conclusively that D.F.E. was alcoholic or that after coming home, that he was thoroughly reformed. We do know he became involved with the local temperance movement because he turned his hand to producing temperance tracts and to public speaking for the temperance cause. His 1897 pamphlet, *Drink, by one of the rescued* was unequivocally autobiographical. The date of this pamphlet's publication, coinciding as it does with the year of his return to Huddersfield, suggests that D.F.E. was already on the way to recovery. In rapid succession that same year he also produced *More about drink* and an explanation of temperance movement policy in *What is the Local Option?*

There is little doubt that when he returned D.F.E. was keen to portray himself as a chastened man. He was at great pains to re-establish himself in the local community if only the better to earn a living to support his wife and family. His connection with the temperance movement was a major part of that process. On the evidence of his writing for the *Colne Valley Guardian*, he was also at pains to establish himself as something of a romantic victim - flawed but, perhaps, more sinned against than sinning. Where that left his former political radicalism is not clear. We do know that after his return he played no active part in local politics until the very end of his life. In 1918 he publicly supported F. W. Mallalieu the Liberal Coalition candidate without the 'coupon' for the Colne Valley constituency in that year's general election. This connection may have been as much about self-interest as it was about politics since he also published *The Huguenot Ancestry of the Mallalieux of Saddleworth* in 1920, shortly before he died.

At first sight, after his return in 1897, D.F.E. does seem to have set aside his former radicalism. The tone of his histories and their obsequious dedications to the great and the good of the local community suggest a change of heart. His account of the 1883 Weavers' Strike in the *History of Huddersfield* is a model of dispassionate writing. There is no mention here of the masters' intransigence which he had criticised so strongly at the time. Yet, in other places, the old spark shines through. *Ben O' Bill's* is not the anti-Luddite novel it might have been had D.F.E. wanted to go all the way in currying favour with the local elite. In fact, it is just the opposite, and his other work, such as *Tom Pinder*, *Foundling*, still contain strong messages of the need for social justice through

reform. Similarly, his 'Reminiscences' make no bones about the issue of the 1883 strike nor does he feel the need to apologise for his role in it. In 1915 we even find him talking to the Lockwood Socialist Institute about militarism. This is not to suggest that he had taken his radicalism to the point of converting to socialism but simply to say that, notwithstanding the strategies he had to adopt to re-establish himself after 1897, he did not entirely abandon his old critical turn of mind.

Of all the gaps and speculations which, of necessity bedevil any attempt to get a real grasp of D.F.E. Sykes' difficult life, there is one which puzzles me most. Indeed, it must puzzle anyone who has worked at the business of research and writing in local history. How, if as he claimed, he only arrived back in Huddersfield in 1897, could he possibly have written and published and gathered in subscriptions for his *History of Huddersfield and its Vicinity* by 1898? At the same time he was writing the first of his temperance pamphlets and the following year published the first edition of *Ben o' Bill's*. His was, without doubt, a prodigious intellect and, freed of the drink, perhaps capable of significant feats of energetic scholarship, but there is another view. Phyllis Bentley's Joth Bamforth was a lifelong local history researcher who came to writing and lecturing after the trauma of his own business collapse in the aftermath of 1883 strike. While the parallels between Bamforth and D.F.E are not exact in every case, perhaps there is some sense in this one. The work on which he drew for his *History of Huddersfield* - while allowing for his debt to other writers, Hobkirk, Phillips, Hulbert and Frank Peel among them - can only have been begun before he left the town and probably continued while he was on his travels. But even this speculation raises a question. It was Sykes himself who claimed that he had only returned to Huddersfield in 1897. It was a claim he made in the Bankruptcy Court at his hearing in March 1899. In the interim he maintained he had set matters in motion to meet his creditors and to secure an agreement to a settlement. There was such a meeting in the summer of 1898. But this was a court of law and, as a lawyer, he was determined to make the best case for his client - himself. In the process he may have been a little economical with the truth. Had he actually admitted to having returned to Huddersfield before 1897 it might have attracted the accusation that he had been slow to make the effort to meet his obligations and come to terms with his creditors. An earlier return home would have allowed him a little more time to pick up the pieces of his local history researches in time to burst into print in 1897 and 1898. A less superhuman timetable and one which is altogether more credible. However, whatever the truth of the matter, it has to be assumed that D.F.E.'s work - both original and derivative - reflected a lifelong passion which has us all in his debt.

Where does that leave us with the title of this piece, 'The Local Historian as Activist', and how can we connect the life of D.F.E. Sykes with the lives and work of all those other more celebrated politically and socially engaged historians of the past and of our own time? On this reading I hope the case is clear. Whatever his personal weaknesses or strengths there is little doubt that D.F.E. Sykes was the very model of the engaged intellectual. His journalism, his pamphleteering and his historical writings are all of a

piece with his engagement with public life and the great issues of the day. The most authoritative parts of his writing are those which deal with the nineteenth century. His intellectual journey was to understand his own time and in making that journey he could not help but take sides. Taking sides about the recent past meant taking sides in the present. Therefore, as an historian he also had to be an activist. He suffered for that and his work reflects this. Aspects of his later accounts of the history of our area are tamed by the need to demonstrate that he was a truly reformed character. Nevertheless, a closer reading cannot help but detect that radical spark, as well as the arrogance, which caused him so much trouble. If we still value his work, as we should, perhaps it is now the duty of those of us still practising the local historian's trade to fan that spark a little.

POSTSCRIPT

The death occurred at the Huddersfield Royal Infirmary in the early hours of yesterday morning of Daniel Frederick Edward Sykes of Ainsley House, Marsden. Mr Sykes, who was 64 years of age, had been in failing health for sometime, and it became necessary that he should undergo an operation. He entered the Royal Infirmary a week ago yesterday and the operation was performed on Monday. Mr Sykes however died as stated from heart failure. He leaves a widow (who was the only daughter of the late Rev. Joseph Curry, vicar of North Kelsey, Lincolnshire) and two married sons. The interment will take place at Marsden Church on Wednesday.

- *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, 6 June 1920

NOTES

I have resisted the temptation to footnote this piece. The reason for this is not any shyness about the sources on which it is based but rather because they are so few. Listing them below may be adequate guidance for those who want to pursue this story and, perhaps, take it further.

The Slaithwaite Guardian and Colne Valley News 13 July to 7 September (weekly) 1900
Colne Valley Guardian, 11 June 1920.

Huddersfield Daily Examiner 4 March 1899; 6 June 1920.

Huddersfield Daily Chronicle 4 November 1893

The Northern Pioneer various dates 3 March 1883 to 12 May 1883.

S. Papworth, 'A Neglected Yorkshire Novelist', *Dalesman*, June 1977, pp203-205.

J. Sugden, *Slaithwaite Notes*, Manchester, John Heywood, 1905, pp97 - 100.

B. Turner, *A Short History of the General Union of Textile Workers*, Heckmondwike, G.U.T.W, 1920. Contains a very detailed account of the 1883 Weavers' Strike which describes D.F.E.'s attempted interventions but gives him a little credit.



Christmas 1905

"God be with you, with all my heart."

With Hearty Greetings
for
Christmas and the New Year

From
Helen M. Fitton
Westbury
Woodhouse
Huddersfield

THE FROST, THE SNOW, AND THE WINTRY WOODS

Cid (1895)

First Published in the *Huddersfield Chronicle* (abridged here)

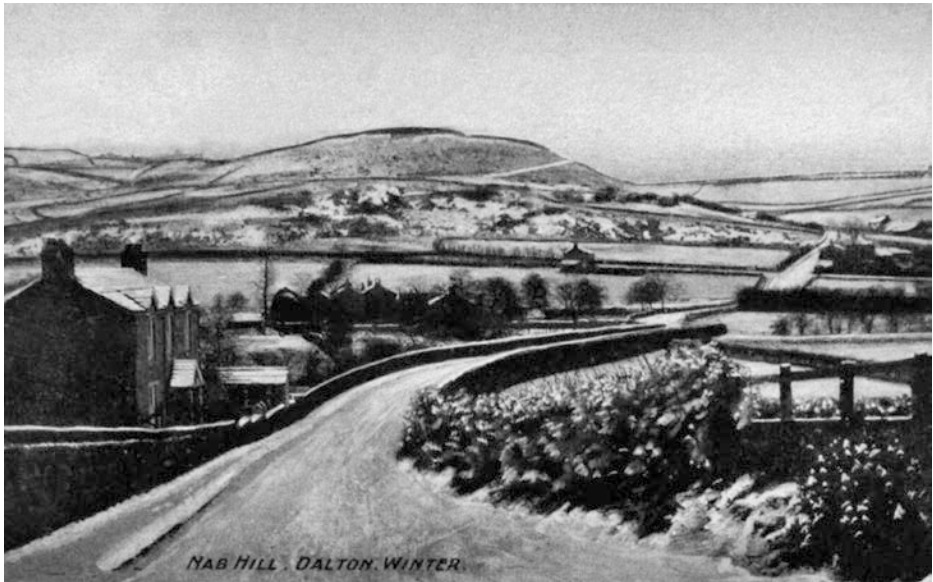
Can you skate? If not you have missed, and are missing, winter's chief joy. In the full flow of health and happiness, and invigorated by the clear air and inspired by the natural excitement of swift and easy motion, the skaters are skimming the ice on the rink at my right, and are swaying through the air and encircling each other in intermingling bewilderment to the admiration of all who can admire at all. Of all the exercises that mankind delight in there is nothing more agreeable than the poetry of motion begot of proficiency in the art of skating. Some race, many are far from at ease on the ice, while others glide without effort, and move all but noiselessly over the glassy plain, drawing after them the involuntarily appreciative eye.

Suddenly the sounds increase, and as the skaters approach with a mighty, whirling rush, they seem to come on like the bursting of a river or a water-main. Swish, swish, swish, and then a combined swush, swush, swush blend well with the laughter of both sexes, old and young, if anybody can be old when on the ice, while all with equal zest disport themselves untiringly. From morn till night and on through moonlight hours they glide in mazy motion interminably. It is also particularly delightful to see boy-men and girl-women equalling, and oft surpassing, their elders. Several of such now win my appreciation as they, with open-mouthed laughter, break from their teachers, brothers, sisters, fathers, and their more than usually solicitous mothers. Two perform very fine ornamental skating, following each other's curling figures on the ice with almost unerring accuracy several times round the rink, now backward and then forward, or in evolving swirls. With what marvellous precision they can cut intricate figure-curves as they go round and round!

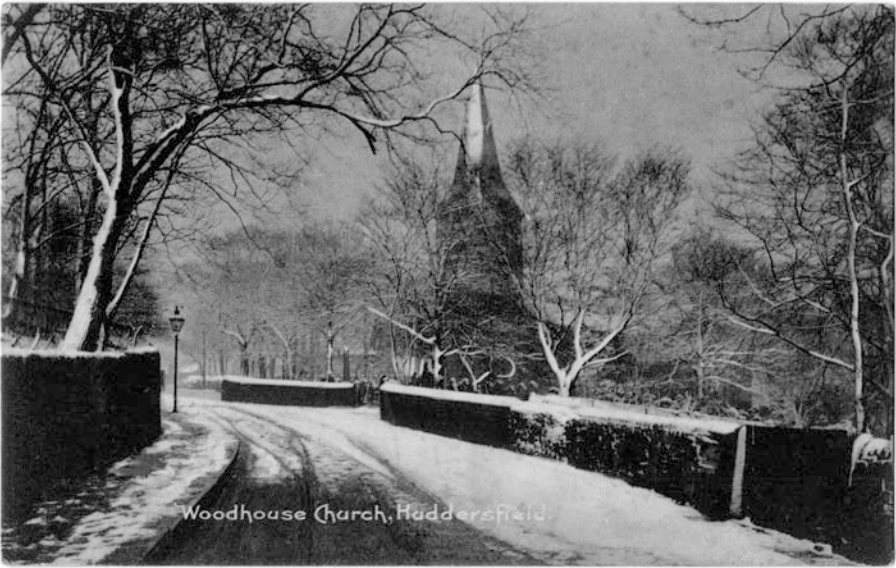
Ah! what is that? Surely enough the curlers are here, and if you have never seen curlers at play you can form no idea how interesting the game is, or how interested are those who engage in it. The game is similar to that of bowls, handled-stones being used instead of balls, while a swept circle, 7ft. radius, is aimed at from each end, the length of the rink being from 30 to 40 yards, and its width eight or nine feet. Like golf, curling is common in Scotland, where all classes play it, but latterly both games have come South, and have come to stay, each becoming more popular as it becomes better known. The pleasing peculiarity of curling is, that it produces for the time a thorough mingling of ranks - peers, peasants, clergymen, farmers, country gentlemen, and tradesmen. Sides are made up, usually consisting of four against four, with a skip or director for each. A certain number is game, generally 31, and the rival sides often display much keenness in the struggle for victory. As the game is now being played at this rink it is most interesting. Wisk in hand each player excitedly sweeps a path for the advancing stone of the thrower who happens to be on his side, and it is grotesquely ludicrous to see the players sway their bodies, move their hands, shout to the inani-

mate stones, and industriously sweep, apparently thinking and acting as if the sliding stones could at all be influenced by such wild antics. One pressman is so absorbed that he is oblivious to everything but tees, sweeping circles, foot circles, hog scores, and the chronicling of results. Business men and professional gentlemen are equally fascinated, and each seems to think as much of beating his opponent as if success or failure in this life and the next depended upon the result. Curling is truly a winter game, and it is surprising to see how patiently apparently delicate men will stand or walk on the ice, sloppy or dry, for hours, without a thought as to the cold or their health.

Leaving the ice I pass on, cross the wooden bridge, glance over the wall at the residence of the wizard of Kirkheaton, join some boys in sliding, pass into the dear old churchyard, and bend over the mounds of my ancestors, and wonder how soon I shall be hid from sight as they are, experience a sacred influence that is agreeably mysterious, for a wonder find the church doors refuse me admittance, pass from the holy ground to what some people would call unholy, enter the ever-welcome portals of Kirk Stile, order sensibly-suitable refreshments, read the old summonses again, admire the big two-handled mugs, and am soon happy and thankful that the inn offers me shelter and rest when all other doors coldly shut me out into the heartlessly cold world. When I have drunk wisely and well, and renewed a thousand memories of Beaumont Arms and its close neighbourhood, I pass into the clear and refreshing air.



Undated hand-coloured postcard. Nab Hill, Dalton, Winter. Scan courtesy of *Huddersfield Exposed*.



Woodhouse Church, Huddersfield. Postmarked 1908. Scan courtesy of *Huddersfield Exposed*.

I am soon through the village and on my way to the Roundabout. Ah! you should come out here when the land is robed with snow if you want to fully appreciate the beauty of a wintry scene... The encircling horizon is so clear that along its rim the white hills and snowy rising grounds seem lifted to the sky, while the undulating, ridgy land presents decreasing circles from as far as the eye can radius, nearer and nearer to the foot of the Roundabout. So distinct do some of them seem that even I am deceived by their apparent nearness, and it is only by an effort that I convince myself that I am not mistaken by their outlines, particularly is this the case with Castle Hill, West Nab, and Scapegoat Hill, while most of them seem but just over the way. The atmosphere is so clear that I can distinctly count 23 spires, indicating as many parishes in the grand expanse. As I count the churches I think of the thousands of hearts that surround them and make them the shrines of their attraction, and though a chapel here and there may be picked out there are so few distinguishing features about them that they mingle with the cottages and factories. Huddersfield is capped, as usual, with the haze of unconsumed smoke, but the snow reflects and increases the light so much that even her multifarious chimneys, spires, public buildings, and streets may be largely counted and appear so distinct as to seem all but within hailing distance. The earth is carpeted with purity, and the silence of it all is ineffable.

Again, on the high mountains you are compelled to strain your neck when gazing at the zenith, or be in danger, if you look downwards, of tumbling into eternity, or into what seems like the bottomless pit, but on the Roundabout you are at home, and can count

the homes of your friends and their friends, while at all seasons you may here enjoy at ease as fine an expanse of earth and sky as would satisfy even a blasé world-trotter. Yes, if you loved your own district, and tried to know it thoroughly, you might stand and from this elevation live over the past, while you in imagination walked over the beautiful bye-ways and scarcely less agreeable highways.

I intended to drop into Bradley Wood, but on looking westward I note the wind has completely changed, and that the clouds are trailing over West Nab, while those overhead are hastening to warn the east that a grand snow storm is advancing. The opportunity is too good to be lost, so, rather than try to escape it, I walk on to the Roundabout again, determined from that height to fully enjoy whatever the oncoming darkness may develop. I have not long to wait... On comes the storm spreading to my left and right equally. The head of Colne Valley is enveloped, and everything in the west is being grandly obliterated as the darkness advances. Harden Moss has gone, Wilshaw is going, Golcar, except Scapegoat's Rockingstone Hill, is drowned. Crosland's spire now holds up its pinnacles as if appealing to heaven for help, but all in vain. The Holme Valley is blotted out and the two others are fast disappearing. Huddersfield is engulfed in a moment. Fixby is attacked and overcome. Almondbury is scaled and disappears at the moment that Clifton and Hartshead succumb. Like West Nab and Rockingstone Hill, dear old Castle Hill refuses to surrender, and the Castle glistens in the sunshine and smiles upon the confusion beneath it. Still on the storm comes. Kirkheaton is reached and the valley leading to Kirkburton is lost to sight, and it is glorious to see Bradley and the valley at my feet being hid from view by the white-winged snow. Roundabout is furiously attacked, but grandly keeps its head above the feathery rushing ocean.

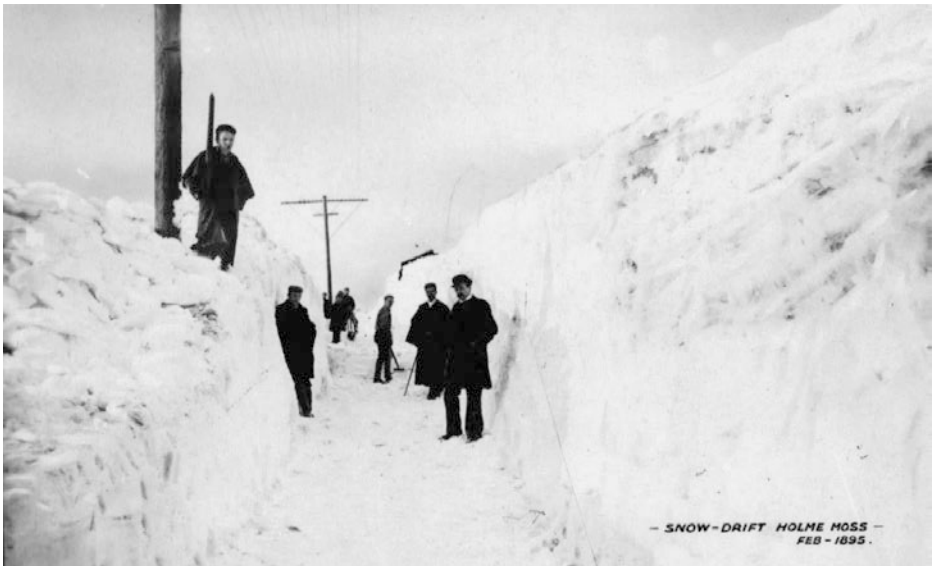
It would do most people good to come out of the smoky town and see what I now see, after being enveloped in and refreshed by such snowstorms as the one just ended. As the sun sinks nearer to the hilltops and throws his warm slanting rays athwart the landscape to the east and from thence receives reflected recognition, and as the north and south gaze steadfastly and smile in each other's blue and white eyes, what a happy change it would be from the smutty, smoky, smudgy air of the streets in and around the town. They would see the hills glitteringly kissed by bright and warm sunshine, instead of being blinded by their own and the smoke of others... The cloudy and demon-looking battalions and the majestic hosts of archangels as they in imposing warfare came on, and impetuously swept past me, left nothing in their wake but spotless purity and calm peace. The outlines of the distant ravines and the steep valley sides look both brighter and fairer in their new suit of snow.

Now that the storm is over I can see mankind leaving their burrows fens resuming their out-door activity again. They are soon making tracks in the soft whiteness, while children, with the ready instinct of nature, snowball each other and their seniors in gay harmlessness, as children did and ever will do. Although I am in the midst of hilly solitude, I see life and activity in the near and far distances, the whistling of the trains sound in every direction, while the convoluting and inter-rolling and streaming steam is only distinguishable in the extensive valleys when the shades of trees, walls, and

houses are immediately behind it, or it rises high into the clear air and the blue contrast emphasises it.

If by any means I can enter a wood I rarely pass one by, and especially that of Bradley, which I fondly call our eastern Mollicar. I, therefore, make tracks in that direction, and knee-deep have a fine time of it, I can assure you. What with the old and new snow, the drifts deceive me, and I am frequently up to the waist, and occasionally I measure myself on the snow, not quite so willingly as I did, when younger, with extended arms and legs imprint my form on the cool impressionableness. As I am out for a day's snow treading I do not care so long as I keep my head above board. There is no possibility of finding or keeping a footpath, so I make for the fences in as straight a line as I can. When I reach the deep and uneven road that leads to Mirfield I, with some difficulty, climb the fence, and make a jump. I am once more taken in, literally this time, for my feet slide beneath the snow, and of course the rest of my body and belongings follow, except my hat and stick. If I had failed to reappear these evidences of the presence of a man would have marked the spot of my snowy grave and have probably induced the next comer to search for and may-be find their owner. I scramble from my snow-bath, and when I fully feel the resisting ground again, I find that, instead of being any the worse, I am the better for it.

How few will come out here and rise superior to mundane misery and foggy filth, and bask in cerulean glory, breathe the pure breath of life, look on the expanse of the grand universe, and bathe in the sunshine and the ethereal blue. Rather than unbosom themselves to the sun, be bewitched by the borrowed light of the moon, and



Snow Drift, Holme Moss, Feb 1895. Scan courtesy of *Huddersfield Exposed*.

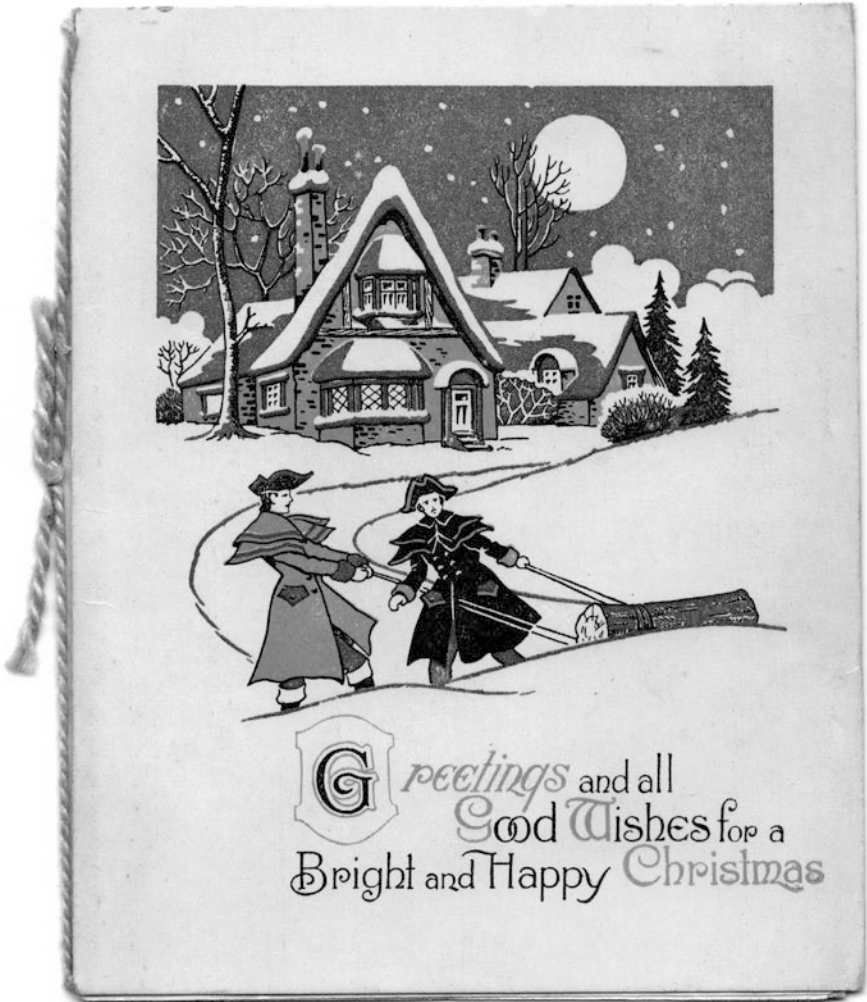
be winked at in playful love by the fascinating stars they will shiver in their self-made gloom and grovel in bestial embracements in seething crowds. Discontented with the abundance above ground they will bore into the earth for gold, for filthy lucre in its worst significance, for silver, iron, and coal, and then fill the air with the smoke of their searchings for wealth and the tyrannical power the world cravenly and abjectly permits such wealth to give a few of mankind.... Surely it should be the aim of man to keep his breathing medium pure and unpolluted and his drinking supply untainted, so that when the snow or the rain falls his springs, rivulets, streams, and rivers will not be open sewers, or the atmosphere be turned into a sea of smoke, and his places of recreation, workshops, and dwellings into monster gasometers, the contents of which he gaspingly breathes and rebreathes in enervating continuance, until the winds drive them out and away to be purified and disinfected in the sunlit air.

Yes, now that the storm is over I am soon in the roads. Resting on the stile in the hollow the solitude is intense, and were it not for the ermine snow that robes everything, the place is so shielded and the sun plays on me so fully and benignantly that I should be fondly lured into thinking that autumn is not past, or that spring has already arrived and is merging into summer... Yes, as the days lengthen and the nights shorten the eyes of spring but wait the passing of the season that they might peep from earth to heaven, catch the morning and the evening dews, awake with the recurring dawn, thrive and wax strong, and become fairer each day, until the pangs of winter are forgotten in the bursting birth of spring. Shorter nights and longer days have ever cheered, and will continue to cheer, mankind till days and nights, and time itself, shall end.

When on my rambles I often wonder why I am not more frequently stopped, arrested, and imprisoned, but whether there is something about me that tells the jovial, the splenetic, or the suspicious landlords, or the stout and brusque gamekeepers, that I am no thieving poacher, but a harmless Rambler, a true lover of nature's sweet solitude and living, active beauty, I trow not... Looking towards Kirklees I remember being turned back there when on my way to have a look at the reputed grave of Robin Hood, but notwithstanding its grand and stately surroundings I am not now tempted by them.

As I move the weather seems to change, now the biting blast and then the balmy warmth. Responsively to this the birds are silent or chirpy; anon sing out gladly, and then all at once cease their gay notes and sprightly hoppings as the chilling wind searches them out, and all but petrifies them on the trees.

I still move westward. Colne Bridge is now in sight and Bradley stands beyond in the sunlight...The canal is iced over as with solid glass, and as the sun's orange rays fall upon its long stretch, it is turned into a street of gold, and I think of all the marvels of the last two chapters of Revelation, and particularly of the fifth verse of the latter:- 'There shall be no night there.' As the black clouds begin to gather round the sun, and black, heavy banks shut off and lessen the light, the significance of this quotation is forcibly presented to me, but as the wind rends them and the sun melts them, and the west is once more a grand ocean of throbbing, molten, liquid, and peaceful light, I again think of the city that has 'no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.'



May you be blessed with many
pleasures,
On this joyful Christmas Day;
Any may Fortune smile upon
you,
In a New Year bright and gay.

From
M. Anwar
10 South Parade
Huddersfield



Christmas 1903

Mr. & Mrs. John Whiteley,
and family
Wish you
the Compliments of the Season

Lane End
Golcar

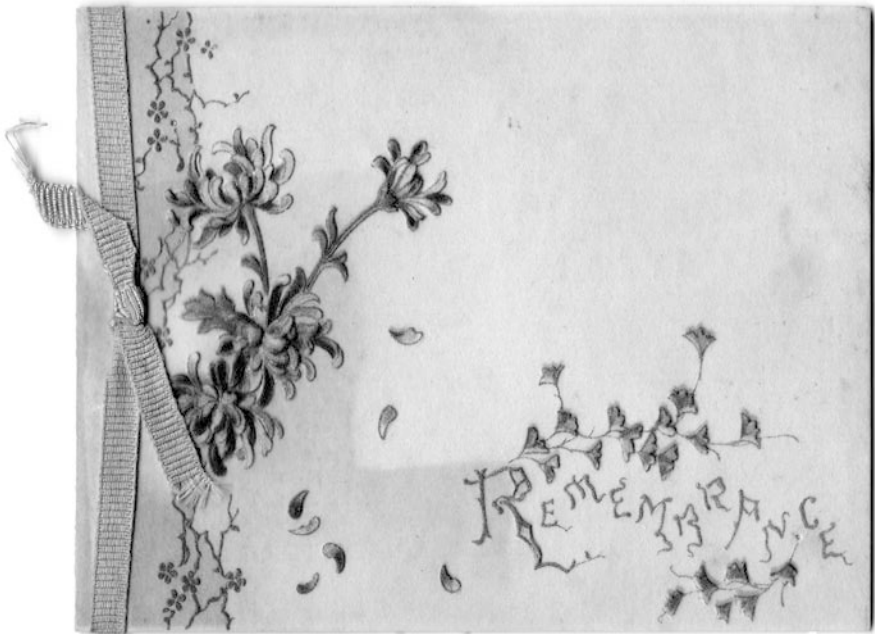




Opposite page

Christmas Greeting
and every
Good Wish
For the
New Year

From
E. L.



Yule Tide 1899

With every Good Wish
of the Season

From
Mr. & Mrs. Oldham
The Stubbings
Netherton

Over the Page: Undated photo postcard sent to Jessie Louise Pyrah.



CHRISTMAS

Emma Battye (1874)

Welcome, Christmas! We have waited
For thy coming long,
Now to greet thee we will carol
Our most joyous song.

Since we met, and since we parted,
Just twelve months ago,
“We have known both joy and sadness,
Mirth and deepest woe.

Sometimes we have been light-hearted,
Full of careless glee;
Sometimes life has been a burden,
Full of misery.

Sometimes we have grown so weary
Of its many cares,
We have fancied smiles would never
Chase away our tears.

Yet though we’ve had much of sadness
In the year that’s past,
Thou shalt have as warm a welcome
As we gave thee last.

For the mercies have been legion,
Scattered o’er our way;
We have had no day all darkness—
Always some bright ray.

Never have our griefs beset us
Like an armed band;
One by one they’ve gently met us,
Passing through the land.

Much of bitter, much of sweetness,
With the rose the thorn;
After every night of darkness
Brighter beams the morn.

Welcome, then, old Father Christmas!
Welcome frost and snow;
Thou art bringing joy and sadness,
Tears and smiles, we know.

But we'll not try to gaze before us
With foreboding eye,
Time enough when sorrow meets us
Then to mourn and sigh,

If, when last we gave thee greeting,
We could but have known
All that since has come upon us,
Every joy had flown.

But we now can smile with gladness,
Every storm-cloud burst;
After all, 'twas not so cheerless
As we feared at first.

Friends have met and friends have parted,
Dear ones said good-bye,
Since we last gave thee a welcome,
Joy in every eye.

Thou perchance, wilt bring them to us—
Absent ones so dear;
Haste thee, then, old Father Christmas,
Haste thee, haste thee here.

YORKSHIRE SINGS: A MUSICAL AND SOCIAL PHENOMENON

Angela Griffith (2000)

This article is a greatly-shortened version of the author's thesis for M.A. in Adult Education at Bretton Hall College of the University of Leeds 1993; a fully adult-illustrated copy of this is deposited in Huddersfield Library.

On moving to Yorkshire seventeen years ago, and coming from a family where singing was the predominant musical activity, I was intrigued by two questions. Firstly, what were these 'Sings' which were advertised during the summer months in local newspapers? We are all familiar with the verb 'to sing' - but a noun? (There is little written information concerning Sings.) Secondly, as a persistent frequenter of book sales I was unable to understand why there were so many second-hand copies of Mozart's Twelfth Mass available, a work with which I was not familiar. My enquiries were to reveal that the phenomenon of Sings appears to be peculiar to Yorkshire, and to a particular area of Yorkshire: roughly that lying between and around Huddersfield, Wakefield and Barnsley.

Unlike the Whitsuntide Walks when everyone sings hymns in their church or chapel groups, the Sings are characterized by a lack of banners denoting a particular church or chapel, instead, all denominations walk, stand and sing mingled, an observer being unable to distinguish between them. Although predominantly middle class and chapel, the Sings were (and in some cases still are) an important factor both in bringing together people of every class and every religion, and in raising funds for local charities. Although not originally formed with a view to fund-raising, this soon became one of the main functions, most of the money raised prior to the introduction of the National Health Service being donated to the local hospitals and Nursing Associations.

Because of this, many became known as 'Hospital Sings' or 'Hospital Sunday Festivals'. Other charities which benefited included the Huddersfield Deaf and Dumb Institute and the Bradford Eye and Ear Hospital. There were exceptions, when for example, Slaithwaite Sing gave its collection towards a new swimming pool; Holmfirth, where with the consent of the Infirmary authorities a portion of the receipts between 1889 and 1903 were reserved for a new platform; and Honley, where all funds have always been directed towards the Old Folks' Treat.

The idea seems to have originated in Longwood, Huddersfield, when Jabez Iredale, secretary of the Longwood Working Men's Club, met with a group of friends to sing outside the Thornhill Reading Rooms (now a hairdresser's shop) one day in 1873. This would not have been considered unusual - 'Everyone loved to sing, they were people of the hills, a love of singing was innate' (Esme Shackleton). Besides being members of the Longwood Choral and Philharmonic Societies, people used to meet to sing and play in each other's houses and gardens. Other kinds of meetings would often finish

with a singsong. The following year the men decided to hold their Sing at the foot of Nab End Tower at 7 a.m. on a Sunday morning as no-one would be at work or church. It was not unheard of to sing hymns outside - Salendine Nook Church held an outdoor service once a month but the Sings at Longwood had no particular religious affiliation. From Jabez Iredale's first germ of an idea all other Sings emanated. A collection was taken and distributed to the local sick and needy. Later, with police permission there was sometimes a house to house collection, and occasionally tins were placed in local hostelrys. Many people remember large sheets placed on four poles at the entrance to the Sings, the money being thrown into the middle.

Sing Sunday was usually, though not always, held at the same time as the village feast. It was a time of great rejoicing, open-house, and meeting with friends and relations not seen since the previous Sing. It was also a time for showing off new clothes and new friendships, being seen with one's 'young man' and introducing him to the wider family. One young lady was asked to go for a walk after Flockton Sing in August and on New Year's Day she was married! Contemporary photographs show just what fashion parades they were. Cannon Hall Estate provided its tenants with tins of paint in order to smarten up their cottages for the occasion.

So what exactly is a Sing? A Sing consists of a choir drawn mainly from local churches and chapels, which performs a few well-known choruses. (The 'Gloria' from Mozart's *Twelfth Mass* being a favourite) and is joined by all other participants for the singing of the hymns which are printed in a programme. A hymn 'In Memorial' is sung, should anyone have died during the year, one of the most popular being 'Deep Harmony'. Sometimes there is an address, sometimes prayers, and often the national anthem. The Sing takes place either early Sunday morning (for example, Mollicar Woods near Castle Hill 7.30 a.m., or Honley 7 a.m.), or more commonly during Sunday afternoon, in order that church services may still be attended. The only exception appears to be Hepworth who still hold their Sing on Feast Monday, necessitating time off work or school for participants. The conductor is usually a local musician; the Skelmanthorpe balance sheet of 1924 unusually shows him being paid 12/- for his services. The accompaniment was originally provided by a harmonium, band, orchestra or string group, with the exception of Mollicar Woods which has always been unaccompanied. The band gives one or two 'selections' during the proceedings and in times past often held an evening concert for band funds. Nowadays an electronic keyboard is sometimes used. Some process to one venue, others walk or drive round to different venues within one area. Processions were particularly important in Barnsley where the various miners' lodges and friendly societies paraded with their bands. Generally speaking the Sings are predominantly adult affairs but New Mill particularly had special 'Young People's Hymns', for example, 'What a friend we have in Jesus' (1976), and 'Stand up, stand up for Jesus' (1981). They are organised by a committee drawn from the various churches and chapels in the area, notable exceptions being Fenay Bridge and Lepton and Bradley and Colne Bridge which were organised by the Star Buffalo Lodge and Working Men's Club respectively.

Whereas in the early part of the twentieth century many villages had their own Sing, at the present time of writing (May 1993) only three remain in the Barnsley area. The Huddersfield area has fared better with eight still taking place.

Social and Musical background: Education

In the late nineteenth century most music in school was confined to class singing. This was inevitable in that all the major educators stressed the importance of vocal music both morally and spiritually. The teacher's certificate awarded for teaching tonic sol-fa was considered of great importance in the West Riding: in 1895, twenty-five teachers gained certificates compared with only four in Birmingham and three in Liverpool. The work of Hullah, Mainzer, Glover and Curwen in the development of various sol-fa systems had a profound effect on music in Victorian England and was largely responsible for the development of vast choral societies and festivals. John Curwen was born at the manse at Heckmondwike, four miles north of Huddersfield. His original aim was to improve the singing in Sunday schools, the music providing 'the indirect means of aiding worship, temperance and culture, of holding young men and women among good influences, of reforming character, of spreading Christianity. For all the people I interviewed, tonic sol-fa is the most vivid memory they have of school music, always on a Friday afternoon and always learning traditional British songs. Scores of the standard oratorical repertoire were republished in tonic sol-fa, as were anthems for use in church. Surprisingly, tonic sol-fa does not appear in any Sing programmes.

Whilst the first Sing at Longwood appears not to have its origins in the Methodist church, many do. The Methodists were and are enthusiastic singers, some would say more so than church goers. It has been suggested that employers were enthusiastic about music because it prevented drunkenness and therefore led to a more efficient workforce, doubtless there is some truth in this.

The Relationship between the Sings and the Health Service

In order to attend a hospital as an in- or out-patient it was necessary to be recommended by two 'upstanding' members of the community. Such was their position that the members of the Sing committees could be called upon to perform this very necessary function and indicated this on their programmes. By 1935 this was no longer required, a doctor's letter being all that was necessary. Sing committees were also allowed to have representatives on the hospital Boards of Governors, Jabez Iredale of Longwood fulfilling this position from 1895. In the years leading up to the introduction of the National Health Service, the Holmfirth committee began to think that one of the main functions of the Sing would be at an end, and decided to put all their energies into the organisation of a competitive music festival for children, the town hall in Holmfirth being an ideal venue. It was inaugurated in 1946 and is still going strong today, attracting such adjudicators as Sydney Northcote (1953), Eric Thiman (1954), Anthony Hopkins (1958), Michael Head (1959) and Derrick Cantrill (1973). Unfortunately, the Holmfirth Sing did come to an end in 1992 due to lack of support from the public rather than the committee.

Evidence from Printed Programmes

Besides the minute books and reminiscences, the printed Sing programmes themselves are of course a valuable source of information, both sociological and musical. It is surprising that so few remain in existence, considering that at least 2,000 were produced for each Sing in the early days.

Copyright was often a source of consternation, both from the performing and printing aspects. The Sing committees made strenuous efforts to determine the sources of words and music and so avoid prosecution. However, they were sometimes caught out. For example, on 7 May 1918, the Holmfirth committee received a letter from Mr John Park of Stainland, claiming £2/2/0 for the infringement of the copyright of the tune 'Supplication' in 1916 and making a charge of 10/6 if used in 1918. Costs varied, only 2/6 being paid to J. Wood and sons of Huddersfield for the use of the tune 'Peace' in 1924. Sometimes the charge actually prevented the printing of the tune, for example, in 1935, Novello required £1/1/0 for the use of 'Deerhurst' and so it was rejected.

The proprietors of the Cross Printing Works, Stainland, appear to be the most vociferous in making their claims, and along with other local printers saw the Sings as a legitimate source of income, buying up the rights to as many hymns as possible. The Performing Rights Society was founded in 1914, and in 1928, obviously finding a copyright affair of the previous year rather tedious, over the use of the tune 'Seth', the Holmfirth secretary wrote asking for details of membership regarding possible infringement of copyright. This obviously bore fruit as in 1929 the following announcement appeared in the programme: 'The Performing Rights Society has kindly granted free permission for the use of its repertoire on this occasion.'

Permission was also required for the orchestration of copyright works. This was comparatively easy to obtain but such firms as J. Curwen and Sons Ltd. insisted that the arrangements remained their property, to be borrowed subsequently at any time without charge except for postage. Local composers were also keen to have their own tunes made copyright, for example Mr A.H. Green's tune 'Holmfirth' was sent to the copyright receipt office in the British Museum in 1929, the copyright to belong to the Holmfirth Feast Sing Committee. The tunes were usually given local names, so we come across 'Magdale', 'Victoria Park', 'Ossett' and 'Stocksbridge'. 'Staincross' composed by Ralph Sowerby was also printed separately on card and used to raise additional funds. 'Roseleigh' is dedicated by L.K. Green 'to Helen Floyd with gratitude'; she was a tireless worker and president of Holmfirth Sings. Christian names were also popular, for example the title 'Elizabeth' given to an arrangement of the tune 'Drink to me only', again by, L.K. Green and an intriguing one simply called 'Fred'. A tune adapted from Mozart's 'Eine Kleine Nachtmusik' appears in Burnlee's programme of 1935 and in 1956 Mapplewell and Staincross used one arranged from *The Magic Flute*. In 1928 Edred Booth composed a descant to an existing tune, 'Castle Street' for Holmfirth Sing. This is the only occasion that I have found so far of a descant having been sung at a Sing. Some committees were inundated with tunes, so much so that a recommendation was made

that 'no local composer who has a tune published one year shall be allowed to have one in the programme the following year'. In 1936 the Holmfirth committee initiated a musical competition for original tunes, the first prize was won by Mr N. Battye of Scholes with his tune 'Well Green'.

The Sings continued throughout both World Wars although other amateur musical institutions, such as Lindley Operatic Society, ceased functioning. Especially during the First World War the charitable work of the Sings took on a new importance, they asked for and received extra large contributions; patriotic music was featured, and those killed in action were listed in the programmes. During the Second World War, economies had to be made, for example, at Holmfirth fewer programmes were printed, there were no posters, and no instrumentalists.

Other events of national importance gave rise to the printing of special programmes: 1887 Queen Victoria's Jubilee, 1911 King George V's Coronation, 1935 King George V's Jubilee (also celebrating the 250th anniversary of the birth of Handel), 1951 Festival of Britain, 1953 Queen Elizabeth's Coronation. The death of King Edward VII was marked in many Sings in 1910 by a special hymn 'Memoriam', as was the sinking of the Titanic with 'Nearer my God to Thee' (Holmfirth 1912). Kirkburton Sing had ended in 1969 and it was hoped that the Queen's Jubilee in 1977 would attract singers and musicians from throughout the district as it did in its heyday, and be sufficient impetus to resurrect it. Musicians from Bretton Hall College formed the orchestra and besides the usual hymns and choruses, British national songs were included plus maypole dancing by the Girl Guides. Unfortunately the Sing soon died out again mainly due to the lack of a suitable venue, the ground being used for Sunday sport.

The centenary of any Sing is of course a time of great celebration. For theirs, Mapplewell and Staincross produced a glossy booklet and invited actor Brian Blessed to attend the proceedings. Hundreds of people attended, no doubt some attracted by the appearance of a personality. Skelmanthorpe Sing had been 'saved' in July 1975 by the appearance of television personality Simon Welfare. Support from the upper classes is evident in a few programmes. Lady Sutherland appears as president of Mapplewell and Staincross Sing - year after year the same members of the mining community waited at the gate to greet her as their employer. The only year she did not attend was 1926, the year of the General Strike, when her place as speaker was taken by Herbert Smith, the Miners' President from Barnsley. Similarly, Joe Pogson, a self-made man and owner of Pogson's Mill, was president of Slaithwaite Sing. In those days the local gentry and manufacturers actively supported local initiatives such as the Sing and expected their employees to do likewise. J.M. Spencer-Stanhope lent the grounds of Cannon Hall park for Cawthorne Sing and Sir Joseph Crossland Esq. became a patron of Hillhouse and Birkby Musical Festival.

The most complete collection of programmes is that of Mapplewell and Staincross where the committee has kept one from each Sing plus a list of the dates when each

hymn has been sung. This enables us to see that 'The Old Hundredth' has been the most popular hymn followed by 'Rock of Ages' and 'Worsley'. The choice was to some extent determined however by the block available at the printers and whether the committee or printing works were prepared to pay for new blocks. There are typically choruses from 'The Messiah', 'Creation', 'Judas Maccabeus', 'Elijah', 'Samson' - and Mozart's *Twelfth Mass*, all standard works which the chapel choirs would have known intimately. A novelty at Holmfirth was the anthem 'O Saviour Friend', a setting of Handel's 'Largo' bought by L.K. Green in memory of his father.

The first Mapplewell and Staincross balance sheet appears in 1915 when £65/1/7 was collected, the £25 given yearly by Miss Fountain (later Lady Sutherland) being a considerable proportion of this. After a rather erratic rise to £115/1/1 in 1924, followed by a fall to £101/16/4 in 1925, as was to be expected, the year of the General Strike produced only £69/4/0. In Birkby a rumour was circulated that Holmfirth Sing was to be postponed due to the strike, so the committee decided to insert three extra advertisements in the local press stating that this was not so. Following no particular pattern, the highest amount raised was £146/17/8 in 1944, no doubt enhanced by the £30 contributed from the boxing bouts at Towncroft Working Men's Club. An amazing £2,508.88 was raised at the centenary celebrations of which the following was distributed:

Edgerton' bedrest area furniture	£1,819.62
Barnsley Hospital Friends' minibus appeal	£500
Old People's Treat Fund	£50
Royston Salvation Army Band	£50
St. John's Ambulance Brigade	£50

Here, surely, is justification, on social and community grounds, for the existence of the Sings.

Mollicar Woods Sing

Mollicar Woods Sing is unique in that it is the only Sing which is totally unaccompanied. Like so many others, it is Methodist in origin and remains predominantly so today, the times of the services and various activities of Almondbury Methodist Church (now the only Methodist Church in the area) being printed on the programme. The Sing has been held every Whit Sunday since 1900. Mr Arthur Swift, Zion choirmaster, conducted the first Sings and handed over to the next choirmaster, Tom Lockwood, who took charge until 1935. He was followed by local musician James H. Marsden, a founder member of the Huddersfield Methodist Choir. Mr Marsden conducted for forty-four years until he was eighty, and died on 'Sing Sunday' the following year. He was an able composer who had his part-song 'Blow, blow thou winter wind' published by Stainer and Bell, and several of his hymn tunes were used for Sings. John Sykes took over for a while, and the Sing is now conducted by the present choirmaster, John Robinson.

Arthur Swift's idea was that it would be much more pleasant to hold the final choir rehearsal of the Whitsuntide hymns out of doors. Mollicar Woods was chosen as a suitable place, out of sight and earshot of Almondbury. It was so successful that the practice continued, and began raising funds for charitable causes, for example, £12/13/0 being divided in 1923 between the Infirmary and Zion trust fund. The Sing follows the same pattern each year: after congregating at 7.30 a.m. and singing six hymns in the field near the stream (cows moving freely amongst the participants), the choir walks through the wood to the old oak tree (really a beech). Another six hymns are sung beneath the spreading branches, often including one for the children on their own. Here is a Sing which positively encourages children, recognising that it is through their enthusiasm that the tradition will survive. A climb over a stile enables the crowd to be counted and money to be collected. Nowadays the number varies between 100 and 150, in former times there were many more: 7,000 in 1930, but only 2,000 in 1931 when there was torrential rain. Even so, such was the attraction that people travelled from Wooldale, Meltham, Paddock and Linthwaite in order to take part. The final singing point is reached after a short walk up a hill. There is a wonderful feeling singing the remaining six hymns high up and looking over towards Castle Hill. Breakfast follows, provided by the Farnley Tyas Women's Institute. The one big criticism of Mollicar Woods Sing is that no music is provided, thus preventing confident four-part singing. Mollicar Woods has an atmosphere very different from other Sings, it has an overall air of religious devotion, of being very at one with nature and the world. Emma Burgess remembers always being late as a child and hearing the beautiful, almost eerie effect of voices wafting through the trees on a still Sunday morning. Honley Early Morning Sing was started in 1926 as a direct result of that at Mollicar.

In 1929 the Sing made headlines with the damage 7,000 people caused to walls and crops, and in 1930 it was decided to sing only at the first stopping point. Police were on hand to curb any unruly behaviour.

On October 14th 1930 Tom Lockwood was a prime mover in the founding of the Association of Sing and Musical Festivals in Huddersfield of which he became chairman. The committee's first aim was to take steps to prevent overlapping Sing dates. As Tom Lockwood pointed out, 'We are all working for the same object, yet we injure each other financially and numerically in respect of both singers and players.' The second aim was to endeavour to prepare a list of non-copyright tunes for which the association would take responsibility. Another was to advise its members to take out platform insurance; this did not apply to Mollicar, or to Slaithwaite where the cricket pitch seating was used. Most Sings had their own platforms or borrowed them.

Longwood Sing

The first minutes of the all-male Sing committee at Longwood date from 1878, by which time the Sing had grown to be a much grander affair than that of 1874. Among the resolutions are the following:

- 3rd: that we have an open air performance at Nab End on Longwood feast Sunday morning, weather permitting. Should it be unfavourable that it be adjourned to the Mechanics Hall.
- 4th: that the piece (sic) performed be selections from Judas Maccabeus.
- 5th: that Mr. Oliver Ainley be leader of the band.

The refreshments were to be provided in the Reading Room and necessitated the ordering of '3 stone of flour baked into teacakes, 2 hams, a gallon barrel of beer, 1 lb of coffee, 4 lbs of sugar, 2 quarts of new milk, 10 lbs of new cheese, U-worth of cut cake [oat cake?], 18 yards of white ribbon' (for the committee to wear). After the Sing in August 1879, the balance of £5.53 was deposited in the Halifax Building Society in the name of the 'Longwood Tower Oratorio Committee', the surplus after paying expenses to be handed over to the Infirmary.

With the success of the Longwood Sing, other villages had followed suit and were borrowing music and stands, 1d to be paid per item if not returned within 14 days. The bread cutter purchased in 1903 was also hired out at a fee of 1s.

At Longwood the meat teas were dispensed with in 1912 and replaced with 'plain tea and sweets'. There was always the worry that there would be insufficient food, especially as non-singers had a tendency to sneak in (at Kirkburton: 't' Committee wor sore afraid 'at they couldn't feed all 'at coom; but then, tha sees - Burton Trinity wor open haahse for all 'at coom to 'Burton, en nobody wo' d gooa hungry as long as they'd a fiddle or a Messiah under ther airm'. In 1948, to celebrate the 75th annual Longwood Sing, after a lapse of 11 years, refreshments were again provided for the 80 musicians and 100 singers (that is, those who stood on the platform and sang the choruses).

Longwood has always been easily accessible by train. Special trains were organised, and in 1901 permission had been given for trams to run on Sundays as long as they did not pass the Parish Church during services. The drivers 'being exposed to the public eye' were asked to wear their best suits on Sundays. For many, the Sing had become a 'good day out', some families even going so far as to attend Sings in various towns and villages on every single weekend in the summer; one instrumentalist found this unrelenting round exhausting and deliberately broke her 'A' string so she could not play.

Longwood Sing is one of the handful surviving today, and remains the largest, around 500 people attending. Although originally celebrated at the time of the feast at the end of August it has no real connection with it. The singers no longer sit on a temporary platform but on a tiered concrete amphitheatre built about 1933 and now covered in graffiti. Like that at Mollicar Woods, it takes place in a wonderful position, high up overlooking the town's mills and distant hills. Perhaps a less devotional experience than that of Mollicar, but nevertheless a very impressive one.

Conclusion

The Sings have reduced in number for a variety of reasons, one is that many chapel

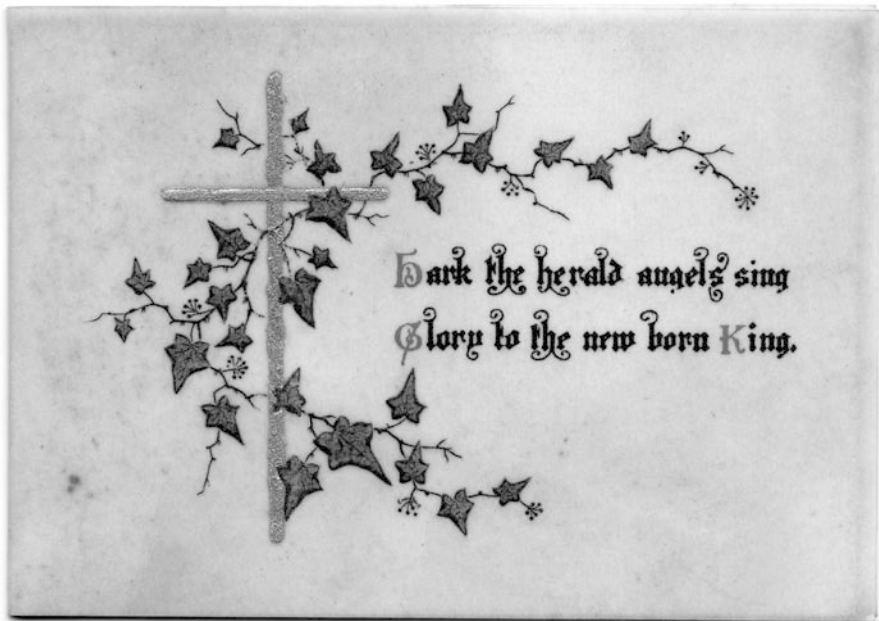
choirs no longer exist. These formed the nucleus of the Sings and in places such as Mapplewell where they do survive, the Sing survives also.

The rise and fall of the Sings follows exactly the path of the brass bands and choral societies which enjoyed enormous success at the turn of the century, developing as they did from ideals of self-improvement, moral uprightness and philanthropic benevolence. But why Huddersfield? Initially, obviously because Jabez Iredale was a local man, but without the strong musical tradition the idea would never have borne fruit and developed into the amazing phenomenon which it did. There is still a strong musical tradition here. It is true that music has been one of the major vehicles through which the people of Huddersfield 'have been able to impose their town on national consciousness'. The Sings were of great value socially, allowing a mixture of classes and religious denominations which would not normally occur. The Sings necessitated co-operation between the churches and chapels whose choirmaster and ministers would take it in turns to conduct and speak, and between the Sing committees who lent and borrowed music and equipment. Professional and amateur musicians could play and sing side by side. It was an area of life in which women could take part, they being 'earnestly requested to attend'. The whole community could join in, whether able to sing beautifully in parts, or just 'keep the tune going'. Dr Steve Reicher of Exeter University studied crowd behaviour and found that singing is one of the main ways of affirming collective identity. It is appropriate that the last words should go to the participants themselves:

The committee are deeply indebted to the willing, capable and loyal host of Musicians, who with voice, or instrument, contribute so much to the attractiveness and musical success attained, causing strangers (who know not the inbred love of the people of this locality) to marvel that so fine a combination of Musicians can voluntarily be brought together. May such spirit of mutual helpfulness never die.

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Christmas 1901

May and Jessie Mallinson
unite in sending
Good Wishes for a Happy
Christmas
and a Bright New Year

Rock House
Linthwaite

WHO'D A THOWT THEDA BEEN A FARM BAHT OSSES

Ernest Beaumont (2002)

I first heard this said about 1950 when I was working on a farm in the village of Emley.

This took my memory back almost a decade to 1942 when I started working on that same farm as a sixteen year old farmers boy. We milked the cows by hand.

We clipped the sheep with hand shears.

We worked the land with genuine horse power, no electricity or gas, no television or mobile phones, just shanks pony and heavy horses we had nine. They were as much part of the farm as the fields we grew the potatoes in. They were Prince and Tommy, Black mare and Little mare, Ruby and Pearl, then some young ones which had not been named yet. The horses had to do all kinds of jobs, but each one had its particular jobs that it was best suited to.

Prince was a giant, he had a heart like a lion, he was the one we used when there was some extra heavy work to do, and was usually used as a trace-horse, that meant that if there were some loads to pull which were too heavy for one horse he would be yoked in front of them with some chains to help them.

At harvest and hay time he would be backward and forwards all day pulling these heavy loads from the low lying fields.

Tommy was only a medium-sized horse, but he was used for all the general farm work, into the muck cart shafts every morning to muck out the mistles, into the fields to fetch a load of kale or turnips for cattle feed, he was a quiet one and we all liked him so he got more than his fair share of work. Black mare, she was not to be trusted, she would set off walking when we did not want her to, her mind and her feet wandered all around anywhere, due to this she was usually paired up with another horse for field work, ploughing or other such like jobs. Little mare was a gem, she was usually used for jobs which needed one steady horse which was sure of foot scruffeling between the rows of potatoes, turnips etc, we never needed reins or lines with her, we just talked to her (come halve and such like), she would prick up her ears and listen softly. Softly describes her nature.

Ruby and Pearl were both field workers, they didn't take well to cart shafts, we once used, or tried to use Ruby, in a pair of shafts but she laid down and broke them.

A tractor arrived on the farm during the forties. It was a Fordson Standard with wooden tyres, but it was the start of the finish for the horses. Prince was the first to go, he went to be a trace horse, pulling coal carts from Batley station up into the town. Ruby and Pearl weren't long to follow, tractors soon saw the field workers off.

Black mare had a foal, mother and son were sold together. Tommy stayed with us for a long time, into the fifties, we always seemed to find plenty of work for him.



Storth Farm, Huddersfield. Scan courtesy of *Huddersfield Exposed*.

The young horses had a bad time in the winter of '47, they were fetched away unbroken in the spring of '48.

When I think that only a few years before this the horseman had a full time job, everything or nearly everything, was driven by genuine horsepower, we just had one little petrol engine that used to run the corn mill, anything else was driven by man power.

The horseman's job was seven days a week, in fact the old man at the farm used to tell us that he once lived in a hay loft over the horses. Now caring for the horses, if they were inside in the winter, they were all to feed and water in the early hours, they would be let out of the stable for a drink, the horseman would then clean out their stall and throw back the bedding, fill the racks with hay and put corn or bran into the troughs according to the work they were doing, when all this was done the horseman could have his breakfast, time was when the horses were much more important than the horseman.

After breakfast they were to be brushed down. Their front end would be full of hay seeds, their back end a bit dirty where they had been laid down, but when they went out they had to look as if they had had a good wash and brush up, the harness took some caring for as well something always needed cleaning or mending. Their feet were

to see to, they went to the blacksmith for new shoes but between times he had to see to them himself. All this was to do before he took them out to work, and if the work was ploughing or some other hard work the horses may be changed at dinner time but the man wasn't changed and he had to see the horses were fed and watered before he ate himself. When he wandered his weary way home in the evening, the horses still came first, and if he wasn't too tired he might get a pint before he went to bed, but as we started WHO'D A THOWT THED A BEEN A FARM BAHT OSSES, within two or three years combines, paraffin and diesel had taken over.

I still think it was a better life following the horses than riding up and down all day with ear muffs and a dust mask on. You don't see anything nowadays, the horses would step over a birds nest, but a tractor will run over anything.

There's a word for it, it's called PROGRESS.

CHRISTMAS FIFTY YEARS AGO

By Ben Turner, M.P., *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 22 Dec 1923

Fifty years ago, as a lad of ten, I enjoyed my Christmas time. It was far different then. The villager lived the simple life; cinemas were unknown. Theatres did not come within the purview of country boys and girls. Pantomimes were undreamed of.

We had our Saturday halfpenny now and then, and our Christmas gifts were apples, oranges, and nuts, and our stockings, when hung up, did not get much in them.

Picture books of the present day variety were rare, and yet we made our enjoyment as youngsters as vigorous as lads do now. We had our 'Raper Dancing' events. We went out 'mumming' for a week or two before Christmas as well as a week after. They were events that cheered the young heart.

The favourite piece then was 'St. George and the Dragon.' We got our little troupe together, and secured tin swords, manufactured paper caps, and dressed up in the old clothes that made us the 'guys of the village.'

I can remember impersonating two characters in the piece, and saying with gusto my lines:-

Here come I, little Devil Doubt,
If you don't give me money, we'll clear you all out.
Money I'll have, and money I crave,
If you don't give me money, we'll sweep you all to the grave.
Or the Old Doctor's business:-
The itch, the pitch, the palsy and the gout,
If a man gets nineteen devils in his skull
I'll cast twenty of them out.
I have in my pockets crutches for lame ducks,
Spectacles for blind bumble bees,
Pack saddle and panniers for grasshoppers,
And plaisters for broken-backed mice.
I cured Sir Harry of a nag-nail almost fifty yards long;
Surely I can cure this poor man.
Here, Jack, take a little out of my bottle,
And let it run down thy throttle;
If thou be not quite slain,
Rise, Jack, and fight again.

St George or Slasher?

Of course, there were contentions between us as to who should be St. George or Slasher. I hear there are such contentions on the real stage. We prepared for the 'Mumming' for a month before we went out. We learned recitations and old fashioned songs.

We had our lantern to take out with us, which was made from a turnip. It was shaped like a face with eyes, ears and nose cut out to resemble somebody's ugly face, but held a candle for illuminating our way.

Among the songs I sang were 'Just before the battle, mother' and 'Poor old Jeff.' Among the recitations was John Hartley's 'Dufin' Johnny' and his 'Bite Bigger,' and Sam Laycock's favourite, 'At No. 1 i Bowton's Yard mi Granny keeps a school.'

There was also the old, but silly, bit that we got out, namely,

There was an old woman at Skelmanthorpe,
At Skelmanthorpe did dwell,
She loved her husband dearly,
But another one quite as well.
Tiddy fol-lol, etc.

Invitation and a Reward

I lived up at **Liphill Bank**, Holmfirth, and on one night we would do my grandmother's house at Blacksyke and my aunt's house at Upper Liphill Bank. We got twopence for that journey. It wasn't a sing outside and 'Get off with you' but 'Come into the house' when we perform on the sanded floor and receive an orange, some nuts or a piece of Christmas cake, or, if after Christmas, a penny for the pool.

One, two or three nights during the season we would visit the two public houses in Burnlee. I remember one night reciting twice, staging three songs, and taking my part as the doctor in the what we called 'Raper Dancing or Peace Egging.'

There wasn't any bad language while we were in there. Our fathers or our neighbours were there and they knew us all, and all of us enjoyed it. We shared the proceeds at the end of the season. One year it ran to 1s 2d each but as we all had 'subbed' 10d each, our balance at the end, after the payment of expenses of a few coppers, was 4d each. Fourpence in those days was equal to being a miner in Klondyke, or a millionaire in Park Lane.

I have always a tender spot to-day for the 'mummers.' There were some out the other night with an old song that touched me. It ran:

Aght o' wark, aght o' wark,
We've noather brass nor 'bacca
Nowt to spend, nowt to lend,
Things are looking dark.
Clooes popped, booits popped,
Isn't it a likker,
Ivrrything's a worry when a chap's aght o' wark.

It is a grey time for many people, but when Christmas comes, let the youngsters have as much enjoyment as they can get, and let us all remember how we enjoyed creating our own enjoyment at Christmas fifty years ago.

FROM BUILDER TO ARCHITECT: BEN STOCKS AND THE GROWTH OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION IN HUDDERSFIELD

Brian Haigh (2009)

In his speech at the opening of Huddersfield Town Hall on 18 October 1881, the Mayor, Alderman Thomas Denham (1818-1892), took the opportunity to reflect on the progress which he had witnessed since being apprenticed in the town half a century earlier. 'Huddersfield was then composed of dwellings and shops of the quality and style you may now see in Old Street, Boulder Yard, Rose and Crown, the Market Place and a few at Engine Bridge'.¹ These were the last remnants of the pre-industrial town, which G.S. Phillips dismissed as 'a miserable village'.² Built piecemeal in the traditional vernacular, without any regular plan, these overcrowded yards and crooked, narrow streets had once been notorious for open, foul-smelling drains, pigsties and privy middens.³

When the thirteen-year-old Denham started work as an assistant in Joseph Boothroyd's Linen Drapers in New Street, there was an obvious need for architects, but little demand. According to the directories of the time, there were only two architects practising in the town. John Oates (1793-1831) was busily engaged in completing the Huddersfield Infirmary and St Paul's Church, whilst Joseph Kaye (c1779-1858), who lived only a few doors away from the draper's emporium, was working on the same projects but in the role of building contractor. In this period, the great majority of Huddersfield's buildings were the work of builders who would liaise directly with their clients. Directories over the period variously list Kaye as mason, builder, merchant, lime burner, brewer, quarry owner as well as architect.⁴

Whilst Kaye can lay claim to being *the* builder of Huddersfield in the first half of the nineteenth century, being 'responsible for the erection of between one-third and one-half of the houses', and many major buildings, his role as an architect was probably confined to the planning and design of utilitarian buildings.⁵ Indeed, in the 'tight little town' of Denham's youth, there were relatively few commissions requiring the services of a professional architect.⁶ The Ramsden Estate which owned a large proportion of the land on which the town was built, and which might have continued the active

1 *Huddersfield Daily Examiner (HDE)*, 22 October, 1881, suppl., p2; *The Watchword*, Vol. 4, No. 15, September 1890, p141.

2 G.S. Phillips, *Walks Round Huddersfield*, 1848, p1.

3 Paraphrased from descriptions in *The Report of the Commissioners on the Huddersfield Improvement Bill*, 1848.

4 *Pigot's Yorkshire Directory*, 1830-1; *Pigot's Yorkshire Directory*, 1834; *White's History Gazetteer & Directory of the West Riding*, 1837; *Williams' Huddersfield Directory*, 1845; *White's Directory of Leeds & the Woollen Districts*, 1857-8.

5 *First Report of the Commissioners for inquiring into the state of Large Towns and Populous Districts*, 1844, Parliamentary Papers, xvii, p330; Edward J. Law, *Joseph Kaye, Builder of Huddersfield*, Huddersfield, HLHS, 1989, p4.

6 *HDE*, 22 October 1881, suppl., p2.

entrepreneurial role which had seen the opening of the Huddersfield Broad Canal and the building of Cloth Hall in the second half of the eighteenth century, was remarkably inactive during this period. Sir John Ramsden, the 4th baronet, who inherited the title, aged 13 years, in 1769, and has been described as shy, lazy and indifferent, had neither his father's determination nor ability.⁷ He appears to have visited the town only once during the 70 years of his baronetcy and to make matters worse, from 1816, relied on the services as agent of John Bower who visited the town only twice a year on rent days and to audit the accounts. On these occasions, Bower was overwhelmed with requests of one kind and another, but dealt with very few. He appeared to have no overall plan for the estate and introduced leases which 'tended to diminish the number of applications for building land on lease' with the result that there was 'very little building going-on on any side of Huddersfield though the trade of the place is evidently in a state of great prosperity'.⁸

If the Ramsdens failed to take a lead, the demands of industry and the rapid growth of population overwhelmed the various existing and new bodies (some of them with overlapping and conflicting jurisdictions) created to deal with the unprecedented problems of urban management. Ironically, it was the succession of the seven year old John William Ramsden to his grandfather's lands and titles, and the placing of the estate in the hands of trustees, including his mother Lady Isabella Ramsden and his uncle Earl Fitzwilliam, and the subsequent appointment of George Loch, to replace Bower, which initiated a new and vigorous period in the management of the Huddersfield estate. In seeking to bring the railway to the most advantageous position in the town from which it could encourage Huddersfield's development for the benefit of the landowners, the interests of the estate and of those seeking an improvement in the amenities for its inhabitants coincided. A new partnership was cemented between the Ramsdens and the reformers with the 1848 Huddersfield Improvement Act which provided the town with more effective governance though the further powers provided by the 1868 Charter of Incorporation would be required to deal with the full range of urban problems.⁹

With the coming of the railways to Huddersfield came an improvement in the quality of architecture in the town. The Ramsden Trustees brought in their own favoured architects, cast a critical eye over proposed designs and appointed William Tite as consultant to ensure consistency of design. The railway station itself, which was the work of James Pigott Pritchett (1789-1868), set the standard for the buildings in the grid of new streets, the 'new town' which was developed on the land to the east and south.¹⁰ Pritchett of York, and London-born William Wallen (1807-1853), who was responsible for the George Hotel, were the only architects working in Huddersfield in the 1840s who had undertaken any formal architectural training. Slater's 1848 Directory lists 7 Dennis Wholmsley, 'Market Forces and Urban Growth: The Influence of the Ramsden Family and the Growth of Huddersfield, 1716-1853', *Journal of Regional and Local Studies*, Vol. 4, Part 2, 1984, pp8-9; Dennis Wholmsley, 'A Landed Estate and the Railway: Huddersfield 1844-54', *Journal of Transport History*, N.S., Vol. II, No 4, September 1974, pp189-213

8 Dennis Wholmsley, 'Market Forces' quoting from Ramsden Papers.

9 See David Griffiths, *Pioneers or Partisans, Governing Huddersfield, 1820-1848*, Huddersfield, HLHS, 2008.

10 Dennis Wholmsley, 'A Landed Estate and the Railway: Huddersfield 1844-54'.

three other practices. Joseph Kaye, Frank Lodge and James Radcliffe were born locally and had developed their skills whilst working in the building trades.¹¹ The town has been well-served by generations of quarrymen, stonemasons, joiners and carpenters.

Standing next to Alderman Denham on that platform in 1881 was Ben Stocks (1838-1911), who had brought the Town Hall project to completion following the premature death of the Borough Surveyor John H. Abbey (1831-1880). Stocks, who had set himself up in practice as an architect in 1868 was the son of a local builder and stonemason. John Stocks (1812-1876) is frequently described as a contractor, but the scale of his enterprise is not documented. In 1861, he is recorded as employing one man and one boy; in 1871, one labourer, though it is clear that he took on casuals and day labourers as required. The building of the long chimney at the Fieldhouse Fireclay Works, was probably the greatest achievement of his career and must have required a considerable workforce over the 18 months it took to complete.¹² Considered one of the wonders of the age and, for a time, the tallest chimney in Yorkshire, the 315 foot high structure contained '144 cubic yards of concrete, 2542 cubic yards of ragstone footings, 3343 cubic feet of ashlar [and] 2227 cubic yards of brickwork (over 300 tons in weight)'.¹³ Nineteen year old Ben Stocks assisted his father and supervised the removal of the scaffolding and machinery following the events to mark its completion. He had been working for his father since leaving school, and it was on his father's building sites that he acquired the practical skills involved in fashioning brick and stone and of managing men and projects which would serve him throughout his career. 'He dug deep, before he built high', observed the Rev. Bruce Rose in the address at Ben Stocks' funeral.¹⁴

The young Stocks clearly had ambitions to reach the heights in other ways. Aged 11 years, he enrolled at the Mechanics' Institution, which had been founded in 1841 as the Young Men's Mental Improvement Society. Classes in drawing and ornamental design were originally introduced with a view 'to elevating the tastes of the artisans engaged in the trade of this neighbourhood'.¹⁵ The textile industry was not the only beneficiary; painters, builders and carvers sat alongside fancy weavers and carpet makers. George Dodgson Tomlinson (1809-1884), who superintended the classes, noted the gratifying improvements made by pupils, some of whose drawings were commended by the Director of the Government School of Design. In 1857, when the Huddersfield Mechanics' Institution was chosen by the Society of Arts as its first examination centre outside London, one of its students, Amos Booth, a 24 year old weaver, was awarded a prize for his success in the drawing examination.¹⁶ In 1844, there were between 30 and 40 regular attenders who came equipped with their own drawing boards. By 1861, there were 160 pupils in the drawing classes which were held on every evening of the

¹¹ Slater's Directory, 1848.

¹² Census Returns, H.O. 107.

¹³ Philip Ahier, *Studies in Local Topography, Part IV*, Huddersfield, Advertiser Press, 1935, p169. Here Ahier quotes from a manuscript Contract Journal of the Leeds Fireclay Company, which has not been located.

¹⁴ HDE, 1 March 1911.

¹⁵ Huddersfield Mechanics' Institution, *Annual Report for 1844*, p8.

¹⁶ *Huddersfield and Holmfirth Examiner*, 1 August 1857.

week. From 1844, a class in architectural drawing was offered on one night a week. Charles Pritchett (1818-1891), son of J.P. Pritchett who gave his services as a teacher on a voluntary basis, noted that despite the inadequacy of having only one evening's tuition a week, 'many of the pupils have been enabled to complete drawings of the orders of Architecture in their proper proportions [and] have been given practice in the use of their instruments so as to qualify them to draw with accuracy and neatness'. Sets of published drawings, including elevations of the lodges of Windsor Great Park and Rees's 'Sketches of Rural Architecture' were acquired for students to copy, whilst the opportunity to draw from casts and models was said to be having a considerable impact on students' idea of form and shadow. By 1848, Mr Drake had widened the syllabus to include 'a good deal of practical as well as theoretical knowledge... relating to ground-plans and elevations; drawing from scale; estimates, and measurements of work'. There were 19 regular attenders at the class which was particularly popular with those engaged in the cabinet making and joinery business.

Ben Stocks attended classes in free hand and architectural drawing and seems to have made good progress. He told a reporter some years later that at the age of 17 years, he was invited to become an assistant teacher. In the programme of classes for 1858 Stocks is listed as a volunteer assistant taking the junior free hand drawing classes on Wednesday evenings.¹⁷ His contribution proved memorable enough for Henry Mellor, 'one of his old scholars [of] over fifty years ago' to send a floral tribute to his teacher's funeral.¹⁸

The funeral service took place at the Brunswick Street Free Wesleyan Church, where Stocks, a talented singer, had been choirmaster for almost half a century. His appointment in 1859 brought him into closer contact with John Kirk (1817-1886), a leading member of the congregation and architect of the building.¹⁹ Kirk was the son of a joiner and destined to take up the family business. By 1851, when he described himself as a master builder employing 30 men, both his mother and father had died and his extended household included his two younger sisters. In May 1852, Kirk was initiated into the Huddersfield Lodge of Truth, when he was described as 'both Architect and Builder' of the new Lodge Room. Two years later, he acted as contractor for the new Freemasons' Hall in Fitzwilliam Street but shortly afterwards gave up the joinery and building side of the business to devote himself to architectural practice.²⁰ He was joined by his three sons, Albert Holmes Kirk (1841-1920), who ran a Dewsbury branch office from 1862; James Sheard Kirk (1842-1911) who worked in the Huddersfield office from 1863, and Frederic Kirk (1860-1914), the first member of the family to be nominated

17 *Local Society*, Vol.1, No.7, 15 October 1892, p10; Huddersfield Mechanics' Institution, *Annual Report 1858*.

18 *HDE*, 1 March 1911.

19 Rev. Bruce W. Rose, *The Origin and History of the Brunswick Street Free Wesleyan Church and Sunday School, 1857-1907*, Huddersfield, Preston Bros., 1907.

20 H.L. Singleton, *History of 100 Years of the Lodge of Truth, No 521, Huddersfield, 1845- 1945*, Leeds, Swindlehurst & Nicholson Ltd., 1945. Other biographical information relating to John Kirk and family is taken from Census Returns, H.O. 107; obituaries of John Kirk, *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 13 March 1886 and *Huddersfield Weekly Examiner (HWE)*, 13 March 1886. British Architectural Library (BAL) Biographical Files.

to membership of the Royal Institute of British Architects. With Frederic still a child, Ben Stocks was invited to work in the Huddersfield office alongside second son James, a fellow-member of the freehand drawing classes at the Mechanics' Institution. This provided the ambitious Stocks with the opportunity to learn the business at first hand from 'a thoroughly practical man', to get involved in the full range of architectural projects and widen his circle of contacts whilst allowing an already busy practice to take on even more work.²¹ In the following year, when John Kirk & Sons were appointed architects and surveyors to the Huddersfield Building Society, the firm was working on industrial, commercial, residential and public buildings in West Yorkshire and beyond.²²

In 1868, after five years with Kirks, the newly-married Stocks set up in business on his own account. The parting appears to have been entirely amicable. John Kirk & Sons enjoyed widespread confidence having successfully completed a wide range of public and private commissions. With the Dewsbury side of the business expanding, and the incorporation of Huddersfield as a borough likely to present new opportunities, there would be plenty of work for Kirk, Stocks and the other six or seven architects listed as practising in Huddersfield. All but one of those who now chose to call themselves architects came from the same background in the building trades; the majority had been joiners. The one exception was James Leech junior (1853-1907), whose father had worked for Joseph Kaye. None of them had any formal qualifications. Edward Wyndham Tarn (1825-1900), the first architect practising in Huddersfield to have been a member of the R.I.B.A. had returned to London in 1865 after a decade in the town. Edward Hughes (1838-1886), who had trained with George Gilbert Scott, did not arrive until 1871.²³

Initially working from his recently-built home in Bankfield Road on the western side of the town, Ben Stocks's earliest known designs for 'villa residences' show his indebtedness to John Kirk. His own style developed alongside the growth of his practice. He attracted numerous commissions in the area around the family home, and from his wide social circle including members of the Brunswick Street Church. Of the latter, the drysalers Michael Bedford & John Stocks Battye, for whom he built industrial and commercial premises as well as the various mission rooms they endowed, were among a growing list of satisfied and loyal clients. With the practice on a sound footing, Stocks was well-placed to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the provisions of the 1870 Education Act and the growth of local building societies. But no commission was too small to merit Ben Stocks' attention; in addition to board schools, whole streets of houses, Nonconformist chapels and Sunday schools, warehouses, mills, foundries, hotels, shops and offices, his output included privies, wash kitchens, wooden sheds and cupboards.²⁴

²¹ HWE, 13 March 1886.

²² A.R. Hall, *The Early Years of the Huddersfield Building Society, 1864-1928*, Huddersfield, Maney, 1974, p44.

²³ Harper's *Huddersfield Directory and Yearbooks, 1868 and 1870*. Census Returns H.O. 107. General Register Office (GRO) Index. BAL Biography Files; and Edward Law, 'Architects of Huddersfield and District to 1860' (<http://homepage.eircom.net/~lawedd/ARCHITECTS.htm>).

²⁴ West Yorkshire Archive Service (WYAS) (Kirklees) Deposited Plans; W.Y.A.S. (Kirklees) Stocks, Sykes and

Ben Stocks' success, and his reputation, was built on his being a safe and reliable pair of hands. As an architect, his designs were workmanlike and practical rather than original. With his background, it is hardly surprising that he understood the local building stone, which is shown to good effect in the well-proportioned elevations and detailing of his buildings. A number of these survive in central Huddersfield where they form significant elements of the townscape. With the Imperial Arcade of 1877, Stocks demonstrated skilful planning, re-ordering the hotel yard to develop a covered shopping arcade with offices above the 11 shops, and successfully persuading the Borough Surveyor to accept that the minimum width for a roadway set out in the Huddersfield Improvement Act did not apply in this case. The re-building of the Boot & Shoe Hotel (1898-1901) was the last element in the unification of the properties on the eastern side of New Street to create a terrace, to face the late-eighteenth-century Brick Buildings, on the other side of the street. Though the architectural detailing is somewhat heavy-handed, it links the beginning of New Street stylistically to John William Street, one of the main thoroughfares of the new town, on the other side of the Market Place. Stocks again showed his ability to re-order a group of buildings erected over a period of time, cope with the problems created by the changing levels of the site and meet the demands of the occupiers for greatly improved accommodation.

The Boot & Shoe was one of the licensed houses sold at auction by the Ramsden Estate on understanding that they would be improved. These included The Fleece, where Stocks was responsible for the new internal layout, the stable yard, and the rounded extension, which made a feature of the junction of Kirkgate and the recently created Venn Street. The re-building of the Olde Hatte from the same date, 1900, and for the same brewery shows Stocks' use of exaggerated gables and chimneys to draw attention to the public house and its limited corner site. Burlington House, on a far larger scale, occupies a similar position at the junction of Trinity Street and Park Drive, where Stocks was responsible for a number of villa residences. Built for John Edward Shaw in 1886, Burlington House was both a family home and a photographic studio. Stocks managed all the practicalities of accommodating daylight studios, elegant reception rooms and a fernery with cascades, rockeries and rustic bridges, in a design which matched his client's ambition to be the town's, if not Yorkshire's leading artist photographer. The same practical approach to planning was applied to the development from 1877 of the triangle of land between Alder Street and Carlton Street, for the Huddersfield & Halifax Building Society, to provide affordable properties of two and three beds with front gardens. The elevations of the blocks are broken by shallow projecting cross wings, on the gables of which are carved panels. The terrace of good, solid middle-class houses in Cambridge Road, including the house in which the Stocks lived after 1878, have projecting bays and panels carved with their owners' initials.²⁵

At Heath House, the Stocks and their four young children (three girls and one boy) lived comfortably, with a housekeeper and two domestic servants to take care of their needs. Clearly the practice was doing well, vindicating the decision in 1875 to move into town centre offices. But, in the absence of business records, the scale of the practice Hickson Collection; Register of Plans Filed Away. Typescript draft copy supplied by Christopher Marsden.
25 WYAS (Kirklees), Deposited Plans.

tice remains unclear. A simple analysis of plans submitted for approval by the Borough Surveyor shows that over a ten-year period (1870-1879 inclusive), Stocks was responsible eight per cent of Building Notices served in the two central wards of the town. John Kirk & Sons accounted for 12 per cent in the same period. This takes no account of the relative size and scale of the projects, and gives equal weight to a scheme to build 36 houses as for a scullery extension. Nor does it take into account buildings in other parts of the borough and beyond for which Stocks was responsible. The numbers working for Stocks probably fluctuated in accordance with the volume of work going through the office, but as his other business, social and political interests developed, he would have required assistants.²⁶



Postcard of Greenhead Park showing Burlington House in the background.
Scan courtesy of *Huddersfield Exposed*.

For the first time in 1878, Building Notices were served on behalf of Stocks' clients by Arthur Sykes (1862-1940). The son of a local tea merchant, Sykes indicated that his chosen profession was that of architect when he joined the classes offered by the Mechanics' Institution. By the 1870s, rather more of those attending these classes sought a career in architecture than when Stocks had enjoyed success in the drawing classes, a quarter of a century earlier. Arthur Sykes' ambition meant that his initial stay in Stocks' offices was short-lived. In 1879, he was articled to Walter Talbot Brown (1852-1931) in Wellingborough, before moving to London in 1883 where he gained experience in a number of practices and attended classes at the Architectural Association, finally set-

²⁶ WYAS (Kirklees), Deposited Plans. The present author is preparing a database of these records..

ting up in practice on his own account in 1888. By the time of his return to Huddersfield to join Stocks in 1900, he had travelled in Europe, achieved examination success and won a number of prizes, including the Soane medallion. In 1904, he became a partner in the practice of Stocks & Sykes, and in 1906 was elected to a R.I.B.A. fellowship.²⁷

At the time of Ben Stocks' death, there were sixteen architectural practices listed as having offices in Huddersfield. Whilst only one chose to advertise his membership of the R.I.B.A., more than half of those listed had been elected to the professional body. Stocks was now the only one to have come into architecture from a background in construction.²⁸ The development of the architectural profession in the provinces was much slower than in London. Its emergence in Huddersfield was delayed by the lack of opportunity, but by 1850, thanks to the new and vigorous management of the Ramsden Estate and the more effective governance of the town, the arrival of the railway and the continuing prosperity of the local trade, things had changed. All this provided the incentive for architects to set up practices in the town, and encouraged local builders and craftsmen to consider taking up the profession themselves or encouraging their children to do so. Over the course of Ben Stocks' lifetime, during which a town of great character and beauty was created, architects came to be recognised as being essential to the building process.²⁹ With the growth of the professions, which is a feature of the Victorian age, came the requirement for thorough training and regulation. The classes at the Mechanics' Institution became a steppingstone, whilst just calling oneself an architect was not enough. Ben Stocks recognised the need 'to know as well as aspire' and embraced these changes, providing the initial opportunities for Arthur Sykes, who would become his partner and successor, putting in place the same firm footings for his professional practice as any one of his buildings and ensuring its continuity in a new era.³⁰

²⁷ *Halifax and Huddersfield Trade Directory, 1909-10.*

²⁸ WYAS (Kirklees), Deposited Plans. *HDE*, 4 March 1940; B.A.L. Biography Files. Huddersfield University Archives, School of Art, Alphabetical List of Members, HM1/4/12.

²⁹ Paraphrased from John Betjeman, 'Huddersfield Discovered', *Weekend Telegraph*, 2 October 1964.

³⁰ *HDE*, 1 March 1911.

BOOKSHELF

Keith Brockhill (1999)

This has been a prolific year for local history publishing, with publications large and small on a wide variety of subjects.

Collections of old photographs continue inexhaustibly, though the title of Hazel Wheeler's latest compilation suggests that inspiration may not. Simply called *Huddersfield: The Old Days*, this two hundred-strong collection focuses largely on the people rather than the places of the recent past from pre-war to present day. Captions are very detailed and will no doubt appeal to those with a long memory and a personal knowledge of their fellow citizens (Tempus Pubs. £9.99). Also hoping to inspire a warm glow in nostalgic wallets is *Golden years of Huddersfield*. Published by True North Books of Halifax (£14.99), this large format book is more of a nostalgic read, with pictures as a bonus.

Taking a slightly more serious view of the past is the magazine *Old Yorkshire*, which some members may have seen, or even subscribed to, produced in Otley by Northern Line, this is a quarterly A3-sized journal containing a wide range of short articles and snippets of local information, aiming to fill some of the gap left by the demise of *Old West Riding*. Items on this area have included Arthur Walton's memories of mill life at Crowthers of Milnsbridge in the 1930s where his wedding present from the foreman was a permanent night shift, and life in the long-gone job of 'ringer-off' on Saturday night trolleybuses. D.J. Clarkson writes about the Paddock cholera outbreak of 1849, while Margaret Barwick traces the journeys of John Eastwood, who emigrated to Rhode Island in 1850, and his son who returned some years later to die in Milnsbridge.

Few years pass without something being written on the Luddites, although the latest book concentrates more on the Midland connection, rather than the heavily researched West Riding. *The Luddite Rebellion* by Alan Bailey (Sutton), lists all the familiar stages, but explores the midland origins in detail before concluding with the 'Yorkshire climax'.

Amid the broad sweeps of history there are individual stories to be told, as two recent works illustrate. Her career began and ended in Huddersfield, and it is in the town's music festival that she is commemorated, but 'Yorkshire's queen of song' was actually a native of Brighouse. Susan Sunderland, the 'Calderdale Nightingale' was born in 1819, and made her musical debut at Deighton in 1834. She subsequently charmed much of the nation, including Queen Victoria, who bestowed the famous soubriquet, before retiring in 1864 at the age of 45. That final concert, at the Huddersfield Philosophical Hall, ended a career of 41 years, before beginning a new one, as tutor and grandmother, of 41 years. John Hargreaves has commemorated one of the finest English voices in *Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society* (6, 1998), and in the forthcoming edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

The latest publication from our own Society features one of the most prominent families of that era. Pamela Cooksey's *Public lives: the family of Joseph Woodhead. A notable family of Huddersfield* (£4), draws extensively on public records and the family collection of Pat Morgan, granddaughter of Joseph and Catherine. Joseph founded the *Huddersfield Examiner* with the support of his capable wife, their son Ernest edited it for 42 years, while brother Arthur managed its business affairs. Other members pursued different careers, but all achieved success, and together exemplify that particular blend of philanthropy, religious conviction and enlightened self-interest that characterised so many successful people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

As the world of retailing has changed so much in recent years, with its supermarkets, giant malls and out-of-town designer outlets, it is becoming difficult to remember a time when the largest store in many towns was the family-run department store. The demise of these flagships of local retailing has been so swift and complete that names such as Kayes of Huddersfield and Brown Muffs of Bradford are already the stuff of nostalgia. Which makes it all the more interesting to read the history of a store that closed back in 1966. Gill Rushworth's *Rushworths Ltd: the Story of a Department Store*, is an affectionate inside view of the business and its staff. It portrays a vanished way of life, with floor walkers and deferential staff, paper packages tied with the most economical lengths of string, battles with the Lamson cash tubes, and paternalistic managements who were known by their Christian names. At just £4.95 it makes an excellent piece of retail therapy for those who remember Rushworth's Corner as it was.

Not all memories can be so pleasantly nostalgic, and the latest publication from Kirklees Cultural Services enlightens some of the darker sides of urban life. Twenty-five years after it was merged with the West Yorkshire Fire Service and 150 years since the Improvement Commissioners' own brigade was formed, the fire services of Huddersfield finally achieve their own piece of immortality, Chris Smith's *The History of the Huddersfield Fire Brigade: a Celebration of 150 Years of Service* (£14.99) is the product of ten years' research by a serving fire officer. The large format book concentrates on the human side of fires and fire-fighting in a rapidly growing industrial town. Well-illustrated and quoting extensively from contemporary press reports, it presents a graphic picture of the social consequences of packing large numbers of people into confined spaces around such highly combustible materials as oil-soaked textile mills and chemical works.

One of the minor measures of advancing urbanisation has been the loss of so many country houses. Industry, mining and the sheer weight of housing, have all taken such a toll that a new book by Edmund Waterson and Peter Meadows, *Lost Houses of the West Riding* has uncovered no less than 116 of them. From this area there are Denby Grange, Whitley Beaumont, Blake Hall at Mirfield and Lower Hall at Liversedge. The former Ramsden residence at Ferry Bridge, Byram Park is also covered, and seems to symbolise the fate of so many of its fellows: built in the sixteenth century, remodelled in the eighteenth, abandoned by its owners in the late nineteenth and finally left to the

ravages of subsidence and neglect in the twentieth.

And finally, from an age that has gone, to one that has barely begun. Half a century in historical terms amounts to little more than current affairs, but in some cases changes are so enormous that mere chronology doesn't seem to count. So much has happened to the social structure of towns like Huddersfield since the HMT *Empire Windrush* sailed into Southampton in 1948 that even local history must begin to take notice. *The Journey*, produced by the community group ABACUS, comprises a series of interviews with ten people who came here from the West Indies in the 1950s. They include the cricketer Stanley Inniss, whose first appearance at David Brown's fabrication shop led to a stoppage, but who went on to become a shop steward for 26 years. Eugenia Moses came from Carriacou to spend a childhood in Springwood, and recalls what it was like to be one of a handful of black faces at Deighton Secondary Modern. And there is Victor Allison, whose son became one of Huddersfield Town's leading players. Their individual stories are a tiny part of a whole that is changing the face of many British towns and will play a significant part in local history in the years to come. *The Journey* may be the first book written about the Kirklees African Caribbean community, but it certainly won't be the last.

Footnote.

Due to be published too late for this issue is the Huddersfield volume in the popular 'Aspects of ...' series. Edited by Isobel Schofield it will include several articles by local authors, in an attractive and relatively cheap paperback format.

BOOK REVIEW

Christine Verguson

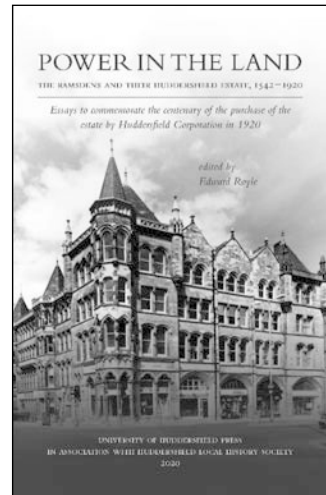
Edward Royle (ed.), *Power in the Land: The Ramsdens and their Huddersfield estate 1542-1920*, University of Huddersfield Press in association with Huddersfield Local History Society, Huddersfield, 2020. 239 pages. £30 paperback.

Resulting from an initiative by Huddersfield Local History Society and published in collaboration with the University of Huddersfield Press, this new collection of essays marks the centenary of the purchase of the Ramsden estate by Huddersfield Corporation in 1920. As well as focusing on aspects of the relationship between the Ramsdens and the town from its beginning in the sixteenth century to 1920, the year in which Huddersfield could start to think of itself as the 'town that bought itself', new light is also thrown on the circumstances surrounding that sale.

The essays in the collection were originally commissioned by Hilary Haigh who, but for her untimely death, would have also edited this volume. For this reason, the starting point for this review is to an extent personal. Just a few months after moving to Huddersfield I found myself assisting Hilary in what was then the Local Studies and Archives department at Huddersfield Library. Here I first came across the Ramsden family papers.

While the Ramsden family would go on to own a considerable amount of land in central Huddersfield their involvement in the district began with the marriage of William Ramsden to Joanna Wood and the subsequent acquisition of Longley Hall. In focusing on the family at Longley, Brian Haigh introduces the reader to the (often absent) inhabitants and their architects, agents and estate managers.

The relationship between the Ramsdens and the architects they employed is taken further by Christopher Webster in his essay on the family's architectural patronage in early-Victorian Huddersfield where he focuses on William Wallen - who first worked for the Ramsdens at Longley in 1848 and whose work for the family included the George Hotel - and to a lesser extent York architect J.P. Pritchett, who designed Huddersfield Railway Station. The later work of W.H. Crossland whose Ramsden commissions included the Estate Buildings and the Byram Arcade is touched upon elsewhere in this volume.



David Griffiths provides a detailed chronological overview of the relationship between town and family starting with John Ramsden's acquisition of Huddersfield's market rights in 1671. By focusing on the extent and development of the estate, the part it played in the town's governance and institutions, as well as the development of its public facilities from the waterworks to the station and beyond, Griffiths concludes that while the family and their agents had an 'immense influence on Huddersfield's public realm', the estate's policies were often contested and that there were long periods when there was little involvement in the town's affairs.

In order to fully understand the town's economic development it is also necessary to understand the forms of lease and tenure that the Ramsden estate employed at various times. John Halstead looks more specifically at the terms which governed the relationship between the Ramsdens and their tenants, the public debate surrounding tenant rights pursued in the emergent local press and the various legal actions culminating in the 1867 Ramsden Estate Act.

Edward Royle shows how the Ramsdens exerted their influence through religion and philanthropy, focusing on the part played by the family during the lifetime of Sir John William Ramsden, partly as he says because the archival sources are so 'rich' but also because this was the time when the town was expanding, with increased church and school building and new charitable needs. Royle describes the Ramsdens' policy towards philanthropy - sometimes at the behest of the estate's Trustees but at other times reflecting Sir John William's own preferences - as one of 'benevolent neutrality'.

It is possible to see historians as detectives of past events and this is certainly the case with Stephen Caunce and Edward Royle's critical re-examination of the 'Dawson File', the main source used by Clifford Stephenson in his 'celebratory' account of the purchase of the estate by Huddersfield Corporation. Stephenson, they argue was too ready to believe in coincidences and to take the individual documents contained in the file at face value. While their new reading of the source documents hints at 'under-hand dealing' by some of the personalities involved, they conclude that, 'Taking all in all, the purchase does seem to have been in the long-term interests of the borough'.

Finally, Meriel Buxton provides a family perspective from 1836 when five-year-old Sir John William Ramsden inherited the family's estates. It is worth noting that Hilary Haigh had intended to contribute a chapter on the Ramsden women so the discussion here of the part played within the family by wives, mothers and sisters is to be welcomed. As John William's trustee, his mother Isabella (1790-1887) played a significant role in the running of the estate and this is reflected throughout this collection. But Buxton also provides new insights into why Sir John Frenchville Ramsden may have been prepared to sell the estate in 1920.

This is a handsome volume which uses well-chosen images including maps and building plans in support of the discussion included in the various essays. And while it has become something of a reviewer's cliché to suggest that a title will be of interest to

historians and the general reader alike, this collection of essays provides both a detailed account of the town's development, not just in terms of the involvement of the Ramsden family and their agents, but also to the degree and the circumstances in which this was contested. In doing so, it provides us with a greater understanding of why Huddersfield's town centre appears as it does even today.

It should also be said that Ramsden scholar Dennis Whomsley has generously made his own unpublished typescripts available to the authors – David Griffiths describes his work as 'indispensable'. Dennis happened to drop in on my first day at Huddersfield Library, asking to see certain Ramsden estate documents; I had little idea of what he was talking about, and no idea of where they were located. In thinking, if only such a collection of essays had been available then to give context to the issues contained in the Ramsden archive and the personalities who still live on in its pages, I can only conclude that the publication of such a collection of essays is long overdue.

AFTERWORD

Robert Piggott

I'm very pleased to have been able to bring you this special edition of the Journal. I won't take up too much of your time here, but it is necessary to express the debt of gratitude to all of those involved in its publication both for this special issue and indeed for all the previous years.



It has been a pleasure to read the contributions of the members of the society across its history. As Cyril says in his foreword, this is my selection, but there was so much to choose from, and I am grateful to both David Griffiths and to Keith Brockhill for producing a long list each from which to choose. There was much excellent work on these lists, and in the end a choice had to be made. Numerous retrospectives could still be selected from the work that remains, and I can highly recommend working your way through the journal archive on our website if you can.

As you'll have seen, this issue is peppered with extracts on the themes of Christmas and winter taken from local newspapers and books, and a massive debt here is owed to Dave Pattern, who supplied these and the vast majority of the pictures from his ever-growing repository of local history, *Huddersfield Exposed*. This includes the Christmas cards, which came from the Pyrah and Potts Collection, more of which can be seen on his website. I am also grateful to Janette Martin for selecting and transcribing the sections from Florence Lockwood's diary. It makes an excellent addition here, and complements Liz Quinn's article on Lockwood in this year's earlier issue.

The publication has also been bolstered by pictures supplied from various sources. As well as those from the *Huddersfield Exposed* collection, I am also grateful to John Rumsby for his new pictures for his article, and to Grant Scanlan at Kirklees for granting permission to use the William Cowen picture for Patricia Dyson's article. Thanks also to Brian Jury, who supplied one of the front cover photos and another fine stereoscope image, this time of Grimescar Woods in the snow.

The whole issue would also look a lot less professional without the proofreading skills of Beverley Norris and Steve Challenger, and I am grateful to them for that.

To conclude I'd just like to offer my thanks to all the members of the Society past and present, both those who have written for the journal and those who have yet to do so. The Journal remains at your service and is first and foremost a place for you to publish your research. If you have any work you'd like to see in print, please do send it in.

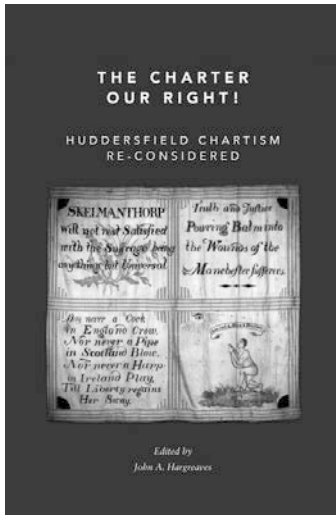
Merry Christmas!



Wishing you
all the joys
of Christmas.

RECENT HLHS PUBLICATIONS

As well as our annual Journal, the Society has a range of books in print. Two recent publications these are below. Information on the society's other publications can be found on our website. www.huddersfieldhistory.org.uk/publications



The Charter Our Right! Huddersfield Chartism Re-Considered,

edited by John A. Hargreaves

(ISBN 9780992984106)

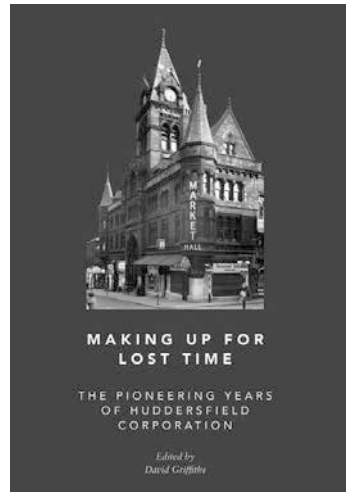
£9.95 plus postage and packing

Making Up for Lost Time: The Pioneering Years of Huddersfield Corporation,

edited by David Griffiths

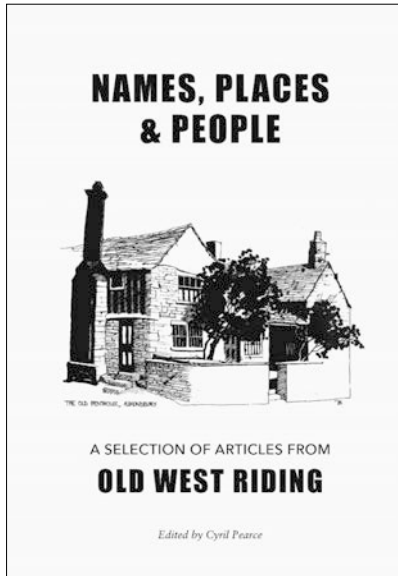
(ISBN 9780992984113)

£8.95 plus postage and packing



ALSO FROM HUDDERSFIELD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Old West Riding published 23 editions from 1981 to 1995. It was a joint venture by three local historians – Jennifer Stead, George Redmonds and Cyril Pearce. This collection of over a dozen articles is dedicated to George Redmonds, who died in August 2018.



The editors were committed to creating a magazine in which professional and amateur historians could see their work published free of the constraints of more academic journals. There were no specific requirements about length or subject matter - as long as the item touched on some aspect of the history of the West Riding. Contributions came from all manner of people. George Redmonds' WEA classes were a particularly rich source.

For some contributors Old West Riding was the beginning of a career in local history and some of their articles achieved almost 'classic' status.

This collection reflects how Old West Riding contributed to our understanding of the history of this part of Yorkshire and to the emergence of talents which might otherwise have been overlooked.

The articles have been chosen for their Huddersfield connections but are of wider interest too. They are grouped around six themes:

- Language and local topography
- Local customs
- The textile industry
- Historic houses
- 'Going to America'
- Early Modern morality

At £6.95 for 160 pages (plus £1.75 p & p), it can be purchased:

On-line at www.huddersfieldhistory.org.uk/publications

By post from HLHS, 24 Sunnybank Rd, Huddersfield HD3 3DE

Or at selected retail outlets

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COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

The Society appreciates that not all members are computer users and will continue to send full information about members' events by post. The Society now circulates a regular e-newsletter by email which includes up-to-date information and details of events which may be of interest to members. If you would like to receive these email communications, please email your request to the Secretary. Anybody joining the mailing list may leave at any time. You can also engage with the Society and get to know about our events and activities on Twitter by following @HuddsLocalHist and turning on Notifications.



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and a happy New Year

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